



# **THE RELIGION OF PEACE**

**BY**

**ISHTIAQ HUSAIN QURESHI, M. A.**

**WITH A FOREWORD BY**

**KHWAJA HASAN NIZAMI**

**PUBLISHER :**

**KHWAJA HASAN NIZAMI, DELHI.**

PRINTED AT THE  
***J. B. PRESS, FATEHPURI, DELHI.***

1ST EDITION ]

[ 1,000 COPIES

**PRICE RS. 3/-**

To the teeming millions who are tired of war and strife and want peace, especially to my countrymen who see their hopes shattered by the cruel hand of internecine quarrels and hatred, I dedicate this small treatise with the hope that it will remove misunderstandings about Islam from the minds of non-Muslims and induce Muslims to act more in the spirit of their religion, which will ultimately lead to the most cherished object of Islam—Peace.



# CONTENTS.

Page.

**Publisher's Note**

**Foreword**

**Preface**

<b>Chapter</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>Introductory. . . . .</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>II</b>	<b>The Basis of all Toleration .</b>	<b>9</b>
	<b>III</b>	<b>The Doctrine of a Chosen People.</b>	<b>18</b>
	<b>IV</b>	<b>Compulsion in Religion. .</b>	<b>35</b>
	<b>V</b>	<b>Misunderstandings about Jihad.</b>	<b>49</b>
	<b>VI</b>	<b>The Ethics of Force. .</b>	<b>54</b>
	<b>VII</b>	<b>Jihad in Theory. . .</b>	<b>61</b>
	<b>VIII</b>	<b>Jihad in Practice. . .</b>	<b>81</b>
	<b>IX</b>	<b>Relations with non-Muslims.</b>	<b>105</b>
	<b>X</b>	<b>Islam—The Religion of Peace.</b>	<b>133</b>



## **PUBLISHER'S NOTE.**

The foreword was written on the 1st of February 1930, when this book was being printed in the J. B. Press. A very considerable portion had been printed when Mahatma Gandhi's movement gathered strength, and the Press Ordinance was promulgated, under which the J. B. Press was asked to furnish a security of Rs. 5,000/-. The result was that the press had to stop work, and the rest of the book was printed at the Delhi Printing Works.

The happenings of the last three months in the country have amply justified the thoughts expressed by me in the Foreword. At Chittagong, Peshawar, Sholapur and Delhi, etc., men forgot the path of peace and fought; and I do not know what more miseries are yet in store for humanity.

I am trying to get this book published as soon as possible, for I want to send copies to all the officers of the Government of India as well as Indian leaders, even if they are in jail; so that both may read this book while they are excited and thus be induced to seek peace.



I am sure that if H. E. Lord Irwin, the members of his council and of the British Parliament and the British Government and Indian leaders read this book, at least that excitement in their mind will subside which ever stops people from reaching a correct decision. If this happens, and I am sure, this will happen, I will be very glad to see the result of my performance of my duty.

I will send this book to the Hindu and Muslim rulers of Indian states as well, who hold a unique position as far as the question of the maintenance of peace in India is concerned, and who, in my opinion, are in great need of reading this book.

DELHI :

*The 17th of May, 1930.* }

HASAN NIZAMI.

## FOREWORD

Mahatma Gandhi has ever disliked violence and war, and yet, today, in 1930, he is inclined to justify them.

Britain has shown the greatest interest in disarmament and prevention of war, yet she has not been able to reduce her military expenditure, or postpone the production of ammunition.

Bolshevist Russia proclaims from house-tops that her ultimate goal is the amelioration of the poor, who always suffer in every war, yet she wants to beat others in the race for warlike preparations.

Mahatma Gandhi, undoubtedly, does not believe in violence and war; Britain certainly does not want war and strife; and Russia does stand for improving the lot of the poor.

But all of them are unable to act according to their ideals, because they cannot control war and

I am sure that if H. E. Lord Irwin, the members of his council and of the British Parliament and the British Government and Indian leaders read this book, at least that excitement in their mind will subside which ever stops people from reaching a correct decision. If this happens, and I am sure, this will happen, I will be very glad to see the result of my performance of my duty.

I will send this book to the Hindu and Muslim rulers of Indian states as well, who hold a unique position as far as the question of the maintenance of peace in India is concerned, and who, in my opinion, are in great need of reading this book.

DELHI :  
The 17th of May, 1930. }

HASAN NIZAMI.

## FOREWORD

Mahatma Gandhi has ever disliked violence and war, and yet, today, in 1930, he is inclined to justify them.

Britain has shown the greatest interest in disarmament and prevention of war, yet she has not been able to reduce her military expenditure, or postpone the production of ammunition.

Bolshevist Russia proclaims from house-tops that her ultimate goal is the amelioration of the poor, who always suffer in every war, yet she wants to beat others in the race for warlike preparations.

Mahatma Gandhi, undoubtedly, does not believe in violence and war; Britain certainly does not want war and strife; and Russia does stand for improving the lot of the poor.

But all of them are unable to act according to their ideals, because they cannot control war and

strife. They want to go one way, but the strong current of circumstances carries them the other.

All strife is a plague. Its germs consist of political selfishness which leads countries to war, of religious differences which cause religious wars, and of economic inequality and greed which sow bitterness in the hearts of the exploiter and the exploited.

In social and domestic life, their influence is no less harmful. It is not uncommon to see parents at loggerheads with their offspring, husbands with their wives, and brothers with their sisters.

Mahatma Gandhi says, "I wish I could gain liberty for myself and my nation without violence and strife." But he does not succeed.

The British nation says, "If we were certain that no nation will go to war, we could save millions by cutting down our military expenditure and spend the money on more useful items, but the rest of the world is not serious about peace. The other nations offer but lip service to the ideal of universal peace."

The rest of the world says, "We are obliged to make warlike preparations because Britain is so strong and prepared that if we are not ready, she may swallow us any moment."

Many religious men say, "All religions, except our own, are wrong and misleading. Therefore they should be effaced from the surface of the earth. This cannot be done without war which is necessary to overcome the unbelievers."

Anti-religious men say, "Religion is the root of all war and strife. Let us destroy religion as well as religious people. For this purpose, we must wage another war."

The Capitalist says, "If I do not incite my nation to warlike preparations, my capital will be safe nowhere, for who will fight to defend my rights? Besides, I must control markets, and have political power to coerce nations to remain my customers."

The worker says, "Down, down with capital and capitalists! Even democracy has not released us from the clutches of capital. We must fight another war to kill it."

I am bewildered to hear these chaotic statements, when the Quran cries out,

"I give light to men in every age and under all circumstances according to their needs. Even the chaotic world of today can drink deep at my spring and find a way out of their difficulties. I

can satisfy the innermost craving of every man's heart, and the flames of all political, religious and economic strife can be quenched with my elixir. I have ever solved problems facing humanity, and I shine in the same glory today in 1930 as I did thirteen centuries back."

I said,

"Let me turn to the Quran and test its veracity. Can it solve this great problem which does not concern a single soul, but the whole world? Many religious books give spiritual solace to individuals who believe in them, but can the Quran transcend all limits and hold out the promise of universal peace to all tired humanity?"

"For the world is, today, attacked by the germs of strife. The ruler and the ruled, the exploiter and the exploited are all leading the world to a grand upheaval and destruction. And the pity is that none seems to consult his religious books at this juncture for guidance, for none knows that there is any guidance there in social and political affairs as well as purely spiritual matters."

I was born in a Muslim home, therefore, I am more acquainted with the Quran than any other book. I felt that it contained canons which could guide all sincere well-wishers of humanity and even leaders of opposing

factions to the desired haven of peace. I also felt that the Quran had the power to annihilate all aggressive warlike sentiments with its noble teachings.

I do not know English. My desire was to share my feelings with the largest number of people to whom I wanted to send this message of peace which the Quran gives. For this it was necessary to write in English. Fortunately I found that Prof. Qureshi shared my feelings, who fulfilled my desire by writing this book. He, in accordance with my wishes, took that part of the teachings of the Quran which shows :—

“How men can maintain peace in mutual relations,

“How nations can save themselves from the curse of war, and

“How countries and individuals can find a haven of security and get out of the midst of a general struggle.”

Therefore, I have christened this book “The Religion of Peace,” because it deals with that philosophy and message of the Quran which can become if put into practice, the foundation of a really lasting peace.

It is not the purpose of this book to convert any one to Islam, nor to further any ends which



would be especially beneficial to Muslims—it has, on the other hand, been written and published for the general welfare of the whole of mankind. Mr. Ibrahim Hasan Nizami, contractor, Burma, has borne the expenses of its publication with the same end in view.

If this book succeeds in its purpose, the author, Mr. Ibrahim Hasan Nizami and I shall be pleased to see that we succeeded in broadcasting the message of the Quran in the world. If it does not succeed, it is the fault of the exposition only, for we all believe that the Quran does contain the remedy of all the troubles now haunting the world.

I once more want to impress upon the readers of this book that I do not know a single word of English. The purport of the book was explained to me in Urdu, when I realized that the book will be a great help in explaining the mission of the Quran to prevent all war. It was after this that I wrote this foreword.

In the end I pray that the book may fulfill its purpose and carry conviction to the hearts of its readers.

DELHI:	}	HASAN NIZAMI.
<i>The 1st of February, 1930.</i>		

## PREFACE.

This treatise has been written with the sincere motive of promoting goodwill between Muslims and non-Muslims; and, therefore, I have tried to avoid all controversial questions. I hope I have succeeded in not saying a word that will offend any one. If I have failed in this, I have failed in my object. The world is striving after peace; but, unless there is greater understanding among the followers of different religions, there is very little hope of success. I have endeavoured to show that Islam is not the bogey which popular imagination would make it; on the other hand, it lays down canons which are worthy of the consideration of every lover of peace. This book is intended both for the Muslim and the non-Muslim—because both are equally liable to misunderstand the true message of Islam, the former owing to too much zeal for his faith, and the latter on account of the gross ignorance which prevails about Mohammad's simple and beautiful message.

I have tried to limit myself in quotations to the verses of the Quran and the most authentic

sayings of the Prophet, and have not brought in anything which would be doubted or contradicted by any thoughtful Musalman. Of course, I could not, within the very limited space at my command, exhaust all the relevant verses of the Quran—or, much less, the traditions of the Prophet—upon any one topic. A much bigger book could be written upon this subject; but I had to cater for the man in the street who has very little time at his disposal and cannot be expected to read much on a subject like this, which, though important, interesting, and useful, is not popular. I would refer those who want to pursue the subject any further to those two great sources of all Islamic learning and theology—the Quran and the traditions of the Prophet.

I want to use this opportunity to express my appreciation of the noble work done by Maulana Muhammad Ali of Lahore in his translation of the Holy Quran—which is unrivalled in its correct translation and concise and useful comments in English.

. I do differ from him in some of his views, but that is a minor point. I cannot express how grateful I am to him (though he does not know this), because it was primarily his work which interested me in an earnest study of Islam. I have freely used his translation throughout this work except in a few places where I have amended the translation to my own taste. The English educated Musalman mostly depends for enlightenment about Islam upon his monumental works.

One word I would say to my non-Muslim readers. The path to appreciating the true beauties of any great religion lies through an earnest desire to understand it, not through cavil or prejudice. It is a pity that we can be dispassionate about almost everything but religion and politics—two aspects of human life where passion is the least helpful. One may appreciate the beauties of another's religion without giving up ones own, and, I hope, I do not ask for too much when I ask for this.

DELHI:

*The 16th of December, 1928.* }

I. H. QURESHI.



## CHAPTER I

# INTRODUCTORY

**I**SLAM is the religion of peace. Peace cannot exist without goodwill and toleration. How is it, then, that the world has come to identify the message of the great Arabian Prophet (on whom be peace and blessings) with bigotry, persecution and intolerance? It was Gladstone, an admirer of Carlyle, the author of "Hero and Hero-worship", who said that the possibility of universal peace was totally incompatible with the existence of the Quran. "While the Koran exists in the World, there can be no peace" were his words. And Gladstone is not a solitary example of those who hold such opinions about Islam. Why does there exist this universal mis-apprehension in the minds of non-Muslims? The reason is not far to seek.

The Western critic, upon whose exposition the greater part of the world depends for its knowledge of the Quran, did not, and perhaps could not approach

his subject with an unprejudiced mind. Immediately after its first defeat, Christendom became hostile to Islam. All sorts of inconceivable things were said about the new creed of Mohammad,—things which could be believed only by a credulous and priest-ridden people like the Christians of the Dark Ages. This superstitious hatred was never allowed to subside; the Crusades and the wars with the Turks provided the over zealous priest with the opportunity of “serving his God and the Church” by exciting enmity in the hearts of his flock towards the standard bearers of the new “upstart” creed.

This propaganda carried on incessantly for centuries and centuries by means fair and foul could not but affect the mentality of the West very deeply. One can easily detect the influence of this propaganda in almost the whole of Western literature. The average Westerner is so insular in his outlook that he seldom cares to find out the truth about things which do not immediately concern him. Even today, he is guided in his foreign politics by the great press lords of his country, and a really influential paper leads nations to war or peace. Now Islam has been and is a thing of even less concern to him; not only because his essentially practical mind does not care to enquire into spiritual problems but also because

his own notions of religion have very often either closed the door of all rational enquiry by insisting upon more or less wholly irrational dogmas, or, by too wide an interpretation of his religion, have made it merely another name for a system of eclectic and perhaps sentimental ethics.\* Where there is no enquiry, there is blind prejudice, and the Westerner gets his religious prejudices from his priest and missionary. The western critics of Islam are no exception. They lack the open-mindedness of a fair critic from the very outset. Even those of them who do not criticize to revile, and who approach their work with honest motives, have not an unbiassed mind. They have had their notion of a religion spread by the sword and enjoining the killing of every non-Muslim unconsciously worked into their minds since their childhood, and therefore they take solitary Quranic verses out of their context, and build theories upon them which are as unknown to Islam as polytheism itself.

To see the examples of the deliberate misinterpretation of Islam, one need not go far. Look into the missionary literature published in India and abroad, and you will be astonished at the audacity

---

*\*I would not say that this is true about the West or non-Muslims only.*

---



and dishonesty of many a writer. Only the other day I was reading a small book by two missionaries, one of whom is well known to me.\* He has come into contact with so many Musalmans that he cannot be ignorant of their beliefs and ideas, yet his book contains so glaring misrepresentations that none but a missionary of a very garbled vision indeed could conceive them. †

In the face of this hostile propaganda of centuries, there is little wonder if so many misunderstandings exist about Islam, specially when the efforts of the Musalmans to counteract its evil influence have been so meagre. It is nothing short of a miracle that we see Islam even now attracting many a soul by its simple grandeur and noble loftiness. I do not attach so much importance in

---

*\* Indeed I was induced to read the book on seeing his name on the cover to see what he had to say about Islam and Muslims.*

*† Of course there are many noble exceptions among the missionaries. I count some of these amongst my closest friends—people whose self-sacrifice and unselfish love of truth would do credit to any man. And such men are not few, though unfortunately they are the least vocal in the community.*

---

this connection to the conversion of intelligent and even learned men to Islam as to the fact that not one day passes when there is not vindicated some doctrine of Islam. The Quran yet shines forth in its pristine glory, though thirteen centuries have rolled by since its revelation. The grand personality of the Prophet yet receives the homage of not only the Faithful, but also of many a disbeliever in his mission. What sword doth keep more than 400,000,000 souls under the bondage of Islam? What persecution during these days of the decadence of the temporal power of the Muslims leads to the conversion of the Negro and the White, the Mongolian and the Dravidian, and what terrorism makes the world adopt doctrines first preached by Islam? Surely the reasons for the success of Islam should be sought for somewhere else. And where can they be found except in its teachings and message? The subtle magic of its doctrines only can be responsible for the wonderful devotion of the Muslims to their faith, and their success in bringing others to their fold inspite of no material resources worth the name at their command.

There has succeeded no missionary but by kindness. The Muslim has more often than not been a successful missionary, and, therefore, he could not but have used gentle methods. Harshness repels, and

creates a stubborn resistance in the heart, therefore no religion can be spread by harshness. Besides, the missionary does not want to knock off the head, he wants to win the heart; and who has ever won the heart but by forbearance and tolerance? The history of Islam is full of deeds of toleration; but this is no place to cite historical examples, nor would the time and space at my command allow it. The one vital question is: where did the Musalman get the necessary inspiration to be a successful and therefore a tolerant missionary?

In answering this question, we must remember that religion plays such an important part in the life of a Muslim that every one who believes in Islam is expected to be its missionary. And the earlier Muslims did act upon this injunction. Islam does not set apart any class of Muslims for religious work. There are no professional priests in Islam, it knows no clergymen and laymen. Its doctors of law are mere advisers, they have no authority except that of the influence they exert owing to their learning and piety. Its spiritual guides are actually despised if they are hypocrites and do not contribute to the advancement of the community. And all of these men have no religious sanction except that of their utility to the people. Hence every Musalman has

always been his own priest, and as such a missionary. There was no college to train these amateurs; they had no professional experience to help them or to initiate them into the ways of successful preaching. The inspiration could not but come from the doctrines of their faith.

It will be my business in this treatise to show that this theory is justified by facts. Even a cursory glance at the pages of the Holy Quran and the traditions of the Prophet (on whom be blessings and peace) would show that the whole foundation of Islam is based upon toleration. I will quote chapter and verse to prove this contention, and I hope that it will convince the impartial reader that the charge of intolerance against Islam is wholly unfair. But I forget that it is given to no man to convince others but with the help of Allah, and, therefore, let me pray in the words of the very beautiful opening chapter of the Quran:—

“In the name of Allah, the most Merciful and the Compassionate.

“All Praise be to Allah, the creator and the sustainer of the Universe !

"The most merciful and the compassionate,  
"Lord of the Day of Judgment,  
"Thee do we worship, and Thee  
do we call for help;  
"Lead us on the right path,  
"The path of those on whom  
be Thy blessings,  
"Not of those who incur  
Thy wrath, and go astray."

AMEN.

## CHAPTER II

# THE BASIS of ALL TOLERATION

Intolerance is the child of arrogance. It is the direct result of what is known to the Neo-Psychologist as the formation of a 'superiority complex'. When a man comes to feel that all knowledge is his monopoly, and that there is none who shares the Truth with him, then he ceases to be tolerant. He despises the ignorant and the sinner as doomed to perdition, nay, he considers them as the enemies of God, and as such to be persecuted. He can have no respect for any religious leader or reformer except his own, because he belongs to the favoured nation, the elect upon whom only God's blessings descend, and who are the sole recipients of the divine message through their prophet. He, therefore, rejects every religious leader except those recognized by his own. The rejected leaders are 'impostors'; their characters are 'despicable', their messages 'forgeries' and their teachings worthy of nothing but scorn. Hence the followers of other

creeds except the chosen one are to be converted by fair means or foul, and if they do not conform to this benevolent desire of the elect, they should not be left to themselves for eternal perdition but made to taste the fire of hell in this world. Hence there come into existence the institutions like the Spanish Inquisition and the burning of heretics.

Unfortunately no nation is totally free from this narrow-minded arrogance. Bigotry, very often, goes hand in hand with orthodoxy. An open mind is very often a lax mind. This would lead one to believe that religion and bigotry are identical, but this would be blasphemy against religion. True religion must be tolerant. It must make its followers appreciate Truth and Beauty wherever they can be found. It must make the believer humble and respectful. No religion which teaches the love of God can be the handiwork of the Devil. The great sages who taught the worship of God should be respected. The believer must look up to all of them for inspiration. Of course, there grow up excrescences here and there in their teachings as Time rolls by; but nothing succeeds in taking away all the beauty of their message. The believer can reject the excrescences, he can even ask the people who believe in them to reconsider their position, but he cannot ignore the greatness of

the great teacher who delivered the message when it was pure, nor, can he reject the truth of what still remains unalloyed in the message itself.

Such a man cannot afford to be intolerant. If he disagrees with any part of a religion other than his own, he will say so in a gentle and persuasive manner, but he will not call the religious teacher an impostor, or the religion a hoax. If he does so, he will belie his own religion, which would certainly enjoin respect for all religious teachers. A genuine respect for the great founders of the different religions can be the only solid basis of toleration as well as peace and amity; for a man will bear anything except a slur upon his Master. Calumnies against religious teachers and the feeling of contempt for them are the greatest disturbers of amicable relations between the followers of different religions. Unfortunately, most of the great religions of the world have yet to learn this lesson; and therefore, we come across this bitterness and hatred amongst the followers of different creeds.

But what does Islam enjoin upon the Musalmans? Do its teachings follow the general trend of the majority of religions or is there a better guidance in this respect?



The first clue to the solution of this problem is the fact that a believer in Islam is not a Mohammedan as the world would wrongly christen him but a Muslim. He does take the Holy Prophet Mohammad (upon whom be peace and blessings) to be his master and guide, but he does not believe that the Truth was revealed to Mohammad only. Mohammad's was the final message, the most complete message delivered to the world. "We have this day perfected your religion", says the Quarn, "and, completed our (spiritual) blessings for you". But a Musalman does not claim that truth was denied to others. The great devotion of a Musalman to his Prophet is due to the fact that he received the final truth from him, not because he is the sole teacher of religion. According to a Muslim's belief, the Truth has been revealed from time to time since the days of Adam. Laws have been given to humanity since the very dawn of man's consciousness according to the requirements of every age and every nation. No age and no nation has been the sole recipient of Divine favour.

*"And every nation had an apostle". (X:47)*

*"And there is not a nation but a warner has gone among them."* (XXXV:24)

(A Warner is a prophet in Quranic terminology)

*"All nations have had their guides". (XIII:7)*

*"And certainly we raised in every nation an apostle saying:*

*Serve Allah and shun the Devil". (XVI:136)*

What Musalman can believe in the theory of a favoured nation in the face of these clear verses of the Quran?

When every nation has received a prophet and guidance from God, its views on life and religion are not only worth consideration but demand respect. They are not to be despised, nor can they be rejected unless they are obviously the fabrications of the nation itself forged after the death of its prophet.

But the Quran does not leave the matter here. It enjoins nothing short of belief in all these prophets and their books, and a Musalman has to do this if he wants to remain a Muslim. The Quran lays this down in unambiguous, clear words:—

*"Surely those who disbelieve in Allah and His apostles and (those who) desire to make a distinction between Allah and his apostles and say: We take a course between (this and) that,*

*"These it is who are truly unbelievers, and We have prepared for the unblievers a disgraceful chastisement.*

*“And those who believe in Allah and His apostles and do not make a distinction between any of them, Allah will grant them their rewards; and Allah is Forgiving, Merciful”.*

(IV: 150, 151, 152).

*“And who believe in that which has been revealed to you (Mohammed) and that which was revealed before you, and they are sure of hereafter.”*

(II: 4).

*“Say: We believe in Allah and in that which has been revealed to us, and that which was revealed to Abraham and Ishmael and Isaac and Jacob and the tribes, and (in) that which was given to (all) the prophets from their Lords; we do not make any distinction between any of them, and to him do we submit”*

(II: 136).

The last verse has been repeated almost verbatim in III 83.

Lest there may arise any misapprehension in the mind of the reader that this verse enjoins respect only to the prophets mentioned by name in the Quran,

the book lays down the following in equally clear words:—

*“And (We sent) apostles we have mentioned to you before and apostles We have not mentioned”.*

(IV: 164).

*“And certainly We sent apostles before you- (Mohammed); there are some of them that we have mentioned to you and there are others whom We have not mentioned to you.”*

(XL: 78).

Thus a Musalman cannot be disrespectful to any of the great teachers of humanity whether he is mentioned in the Quran or not for the simple reason that he may be one of the prophets in whom it is essential for him to believe. Neither can he disbelieve in the truth of his message, because he must believe in what has been revealed to the prophets before the advent of Mohammad. And therefore the Muslim formula of aith contains a statement to the effect that the reciter believes in all the apostles of Allah and His books.

This will show that the Quran has struck at the very root of intoleraanee. But it may be said that this is true of its attitude towards revealed religion

only. It is asserted that Islam is nothing if not intolerant towards Polytheism and idol worship. To a certain extent this is true, because the grand object of Islam is to establish the great doctrine of an absolute and pure monotheism. This is no place to discuss the relative virtues of monotheism and polytheism and their good or sinister influence upon the whole character, nay, the very life of individuals and nations. But people forget that the intolerance of a doctrine is not the intolerance of its followers. Islam does condemn in the strongest terms the beliefs and the practices of the polytheists and the idol-worshippers, but it nowhere permits a Muslim to deal arrogantly or unjustly with them. Of course a monotheistic religion could not be consistent if it were to enjoin respect for anything that is believed to be an associate of, or partaking of the virtues of the Almighty. A man can be either a monotheist or a polytheist. There is no half-way house between the two. Either you believe in one God, or in more than one God. Therefore it was constitutionally impossible for Islam to share with the polytheists any respect for the alleged associates of Allah. But Islam has done what it could. If it could not enjoin respect, it has enjoined courtesy. The Holy Quran says:—

*“And do not abuse those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest exceeding limits they should*

*abuse Allah out of ignorance. Thus have we made fair seeming to every people their deeds; then to their Lord shall be their return so He will inform them of what they did."*

The Musalman, however strongly he may condemn idol worship, is not allowed to abuse the idols because that would result in mutual bickerings and possibly a breach of peace. This is the attitude of Islam towards what it was and has ever been its mission to oppose.

Polytheism is the very negation of Islam, yet no Muslim has been allowed to injure the feelings of the Polytheists.

A religion which recognizes the Truth to be found in any creed, which enjoins respect for all the great religions of the world, and which expects its followers to be courteous even to idols and others associated with Allah strikes at the very root of intolerance. If all the religions of the world could appreciate and follow this great injunction of Islam, there would be great amity and peace among their followers. Islam lays down canons of tolerance which should excite the admiration and envy of all free thinkers and lovers of goodwill and toleration.

## CHAPTER III

# THE DOCTRINE OF A CHOSEN PEOPLE.

From what has already been said, it will be clear that Islam has done all that could be done to prevent the formation of a 'superiority complex'. The respect enjoined for the prophets of all nations and all times cuts at the very root of any one nation or people thinking of themselves as the favourite nation of God. But this fact has not been left to mere conjecture. It has been clearly said:

*"(All) people are a single nation."* (II:213).

None who believes in this can be arrogant, nor suffer from the mania of race superiority, colour prejudice, or religious intolerance. Sadi, the great Muslim poet, moralist, and thinker drew his inspiration from this verse when he said,

“Men are the limbs of one another,  
For they are of the same origin in creation

And it is due to this universal belief among the Muslims in the brotherhood of man that we find all Muslim nations remarkably free from racial prejudice. There has been a perfect understanding between the different races professing Islam. Besides, Muslims have never considered any non-Muslim nation despicable because of its colour or race. The Abyssinian and the Arab, the Persian and the Indian, the Turk and the Albanian have very freely intermarried. Political considerations have sometimes led individual rulers to oppress subject nations, but there never has been a systematic persecution of non-Muslim races under any Muslim Empire. The Muslim has, as a rule, left his subject nations alone and let them enjoy a full autonomy unknown under any other contemporary regime and even a modern state would not dream of allowing so much freedom to any composite minority. The existence of semi-independent non-Muslim communities in the heart of every Islamic Empire proves the truth of this contention. This the Muslim did in ages of intolerance. How could he

---

بنی آدم اعضای یک دیگرند  
کله در آفرینش بیک جگرند



develop a rule of government till then unknown to the world? The Quran made the Muslim nation, and the Quran only could have taught it tolerance.

How difficult does the world find it even today to understand that the essential unity of mankind is too great to be affected by small incidents of colour, race, or difference in civilization and culture? How difficult does the white man find it to be considerate to the poor Negro? And how inhuman is the treatment which the Christian Belgian metes out to the Christian native of the Congo. For how long has the Hindu Brahmin maltreated and tyrannized over the Hindu untouchable? How great are the impediments in the way of the peacemaker who wants to create a peaceful union out of the chaotic world of jealous, selfish and suspicious nations of Europe? It would seem that our differences are greater than our similarities, that our interests are more conflicting than identical: yet every thinking mind recognizes the unity of mankind, and bows down, at least theoretically, before the great truth enunciated by Islam. But the world lacks the strength to follow this ideal boldly. The reason is, that nowhere, except in Islam, does man come across that democratic teaching of the essential unity of mankind which alone can pave the path to this noble ideal of universal love and amity.

The doctrine of the equality of mankind is so inherent in the teachings of Islam that no Muslim country has had to face the problem of class war. Socialism, Bolshevism, Fascism, agrarian troubles, trade disputes and industrial upheavals are all unknown to Islamic countries, simply because a Muslim is so imbued with the spirit of equality that he is constitutionally unable to be arrogant. His poorest brother of the blackest face is on the same social standing as the all powerful shadow of God upon Earth, the Commander of the Faithful. Bilal and Omar stand shoulder to shoulder in prayers and sit at the same table to partake of a common meal. This spirit does not confine itself only to the ranks of Islam, it is met with in the dealings of the Muslim with his neighbours as well. While the Jew was despised and persecuted everywhere, he was welcome in all the Muslim countries. The untouchable was not, and is not, an untouchable to a Muslim. He meets the Negro in Africa on equal terms, and wins his love: he respects the Mongolian for his qualities: and he abhors the very notion of race superiority. Wherever he went as a conqueror, he met and mixed with the conquered as man ought to meet and mix with man. Segregated areas and watertight social divisions were unknown to him. In Persia he became a Persian and as enthusiastic about the language, traditions, and literature

of the country as the sons of the soil themselves. In Bengal he developed Bengali, and at Delhi Hindi. The Punjab made him a Panjabi, and Afghanistan an Afghan. He never kept aloof; he was never obsessed with the idea of being too good to mix with the 'despicable native' and adopt his 'corrupt ways'. Surely a people which was so essentially religious, whose every phase of life was based upon the sacred teachings of his great Prophet, and who drew his notions of right and wrong from the Muslim code of law and morals, could not but have found this lesson of toleration in the pages of the Quran, to which we should turn to see what it inculcates in the minds of its followers in this respect.

The notion of superiority is so foreign to the teachings of the Quran that those who are proud and 'exult in the land' are condemned in the severest terms.

*"I will turn away from my communications those who are unjustly proud in the land".* (VII:146)

This verse amounts to saying that the proud will get no divine guidance and help, it is only the meek who will be guided aright and helped.

Another verse is more clear:

*“And do not go about in the land exultingly, for you can not cut through the earth nor reach the mountains in height;*

*“All this—the evil of it—is hateful in the sight of your Lord”.* (XVII: 37, 38).

Humility, on the other hand, is enjoined as a necessary virtue:—

*“And the (true) servants of the Beneficent God are they who walk on the earth in humility, and when the ignorant address them (insolently) they say, Peace”.* (XXV:63)

*“And do not turn your face away from people in contempt, nor go about in the land exulting overmuch; surely Allah does not love any self-conceited boaster;*

*“And pursue the right course in your going about, and lower your voice; surely the most hateful of voices is braying of the asses”.* (XXXI: 18, 19.)

The Prophet enforced these teachings by the following sayings:—

*“God has revealed to me.  
Be humble; do not exult; nor be high handed”.*  
(Ayaz: Mishkat.)

*"Wealth does not decrease by charity; forgiveness increases a man's respect, and he who is humble for the sake of his Lord, Allah increases his status in life".*

*"O Ayesha! be humble.*

*Allah loves the humble and hates the proud."*

A nation should not even ridicule another:—

*"O you who believe! let not one people laugh at another people, perchance they may be better than they, nor let the women (laugh) at (other women), perchance they may be better than they".* (XLIX: 11)

There is an aristocracy which Islam does recognize, but it is not the aristocracy of birth or wealth:—

*"O you man! surely we have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know each other; surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty); surely Allah is knowing, Aware."*

(XLIX: 31).

It is this aristocracy of good deeds which the Muslims are required to form:—

*"And thus we have made you a good nation*

*that you may be the bearers of witness to the people and that the Apostle may be a bearer of witness to you.*

(II:143),

This explains clearly that the Muslims should be 'the bearers of witness' to men, by their actions they should form a model for mankind. They should preach the Truth and induce others to follow it by their example. If they act upon this, they are a chosen people—a chosen people in the sense that they are to fulfil the divine mission of improving the lot of mankind both spiritually and materially, because Islam neglects neither the soul nor the body and shows us the way of success in both worlds. This is reinforced by the following:—

*"You are the best of the nations raised up for the benefit of men".*

(III: 109)

*"And most surely it is an eminence for you and your people; and you shall be soon questioned."*

(XLI: 44)

The 'eminence' is for the benefit of mankind, and if a Muslim does not fulfil his responsibility, he will be questioned about it.

And so it is not to be an easy honour. The Quran has it that the Muslims can attain to this

position, not by lethargy or indifference, but only by a hard struggle:—

“And we will most certainly try you with somewhat of fear and hunger and loss of property and lives and fruits, and give news to the patient, who, when a misfortune befalls them, say: Surely we are Allah’s and to Him shall we return.” (II: 155,156)

“Or do you think that you would enter the garden while yet the state of those who have passed away before you has not come upon you; distress and affliction befell them and they were shaken violently, so that the apostle and those who believed with him said: When will the help of Allah come? Now surely the help of Allah is nigh.” (II:214)

A learned commentator rightly says, “Entering the garden stands for success against the enemy in this life and salvation in the next”. This means that Muslims cannot aspire to any greatness either in this world or the next without good deeds. Thus it would be clear that Islam believes in deeds; any nation which acts upon the principles enunciated as necessary for success will become the exalted nation. This idea cuts at the very root of any one set of people believing that they are the chosen of

God. All nations are equal in the sight of God. He has given equal opportunities to all. The nation which believes in the laws of progress and acts upon them will be successful.

The Jews believed that salvation was their monopoly and so did the followers of many a religion. It is this doctrine—this failure to see that salvation cannot be the monopoly of any one nation or creed—that has led many people, benevolent at heart, to intolerance and persecution. If salvation is the monopoly of any one creed, its followers would naturally like to share it with others. And if others are blind and fail to see their own advantage, why not force them into accepting it?

Islam has no patience with these people:—

*“And they say: None shall enter the garden (of paradise) except he who is a Jew or the Christians. These are their vain desires. Say: Bring your proof if you are truthful.*

*“Yea! whoever submits himself entirely to Allah and he is the doer of good (to others), he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for him, nor shall he grieve.*

*“And the Jews say: The Christians do not*



*follow anything (good); and the Christians say: The Jews do not follow anything (good); while they recite the same book. Even thus say those who have no knowledge like to what they say; so Allah shall judge between them on the day of resurrection in what they differ”.*

(II: 111, 112, 113).

Thus salvation is not the monopoly of one nation or people. Those who consider themselves to be favourites of Allah and as such immune from the consequences of their deeds are mistaken. No people can afford to look down upon others, because there may be good men in all nations and all creeds. Thus a Musalman cannot be arrogant, because he knows that there may be good men in other sects as well. The pride which the consciousness of the monopoly of rewards from Allah gives is totally foreign to Islam. The Quran is quite clear upon this point, as the following verses will show:—

*“Surely those who believe and those who are Jews, and the Christians, and the Sabeans, whoever believes in Allah and the last day and does good, they shall have their reward from their Lord, and there is no fear for them, nor shall they grieve”.*

(II: 62).

The same thing has been repeated in almost identical words in the following:—

*“Surely those who believe and those who are Jews and the Sabeans and the Christians--whoever believes in Allah and the last day and does good—they shall have no fear, nor shall they grieve”. (V:69).*

It could not be put more clearly than this that Musalmans are not true to their religion, if they do not abstain from evil. If they persist in bad deeds, they cannot in any way be proud of their religion. It is the actual deed which matters in the eye of Allah, though, of course, the right belief is necessary in order to be able to distinguish the right from the wrong. The Quran lays down certain principles—any one who follows them shall have his reward. The standard of absolute good is the same; there is such a thing as abstract good, and in this world of cause and effect good deeds will produce the same good results for everyone. In the hereafter, as well, every right action will produce the necessary amount of peace to the soul. Thus a Musalman has no authority to think that he will not be questioned about his deeds because he believes in Islam. The Prophet said,

*“Even if the mountain transgresses the right, it shall be broken into dust.”*

Thus a Muslim cannot be obsessed with the idea that the very fact of his calling himself a Muslim will make him the favourite of Allah, and therefore he will be the last man to look down upon others as outcastes in the Kingdom of Allah, because they, as well, can do good deeds and have their rewards.

Of course, Islam recognizes certain deadly sins—sins whose magnitude is so great that their evil consequences outweigh the little good one is able to do in life and which pollute the very soul of a man from which all good actions spring. How often do we see this phenomenon in material life! All the antidotes in the world may not save the life of a man who has taken a heavy dose of some deadly poison. If a rock falls upon a man, he can not save himself by lifting his arm. But this consideration cannot lead a Muslim to intolerance, for he is as liable to fall into this deadly abyss of irredeemable sin ever yawning at his feet as the most miserable sinner who has never seen the light. He knows how frail humanity is; he can not have the heart to throw stones at those who are groping in the darkness. The example of the Holy Prophet would give sufficient

guidance; for did not the Master weep and pray for the blind men who persecuted him instead of cursing them? Did he not, time after time, excuse the inordinateness of his deadliest enemies?

Another reason for intolerance is that people do not realize that every soul has to bear its own burden, and, therefore, in all fairness, it should be allowed to choose its own way. This has been made clear in the Quran, and there are so many verses to this effect that one could go on quoting them in this book without saying any thing else. The following are some of them:—

*“And no soul earns (evil) but against itself, and no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another; then to your Lord is your return, so He will inform you of that in which you differed”.*

(VI: 165).

*“That no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another;*

*“And that man shall have nothing but what he strives for;*

*that his striving shall soon be seen,*

*"Then shall he be rewarded for it with the fullest reward;*

*"And that to your Lord is the goal."*

(LIII: 38, 39, 40, 41, 42).

*"Whoever goes aright, for his own soul does he go aright, and whoever goes astray, to his detriment only does he go astray, nor can the bearer of a burden bear the burden of another, nor do we chastise till we raise an apostle".*

(XVII: 15)

*"And we have made every man's actions to cling to his neck"*

(XVII: 13).

*"Say: You will not be questioned as to what we are guilty of, nor shall we be questioned as to what you do.*

*"Say: Our Lord will gather us together, then will He judge between us with truth, and He is the greatest Judge, the All knowing."*

(XXXIV: 25, 26,).

*"And a burdened soul cannot bear the burden of another; and if one weighed down by burden should cry for (another to carry) its burden, not aught of it shall be carried, even though he be near of kin"*

(XXXV: 18).

*"And whoever purifies himself, he purifies himself only for his own soul"* (XXXV: 18).

*"And no bearer of burden shall bear the burden of another; then to your Lord is your return, then He will inform you of what you did; surely He is cognizant of what is in the breasts."* (XXXIX: 7)

*"So whoever follows the right way, it is for his own soul, and whoever errs, he errs, only to its detriment, and you are not a custodian over them".* (XXXIX: 41)

*"Whoever does good, it is for his own soul, and whoever does evil, it is against it; and your Lord is not in the least unjust to his servants".* (XLI: 46)

*"Whoever does good, it is for his own soul, and whoever does evil, it is against himself, then you shall be brought back to your Lord".* (XLV: 15).

The following verses in which the Prophet has been addressed, make my meaning even more clear:—

*"And the blind and the seeing are not alike,*

*"Nor the darkness and the light,*

*"Nor the shade and the heat,*

*"Neither are the living and the dead alike."*

*"Surely Allah makes whom he pleases hear, and none cannot make those hear who are in the graves.*

*"You are naught but a warner.*

*"Surely we have sent you with the truth as a bearer of good news and a warner; and there is not a people but a warner has gone among them".*

(XXXV: 19, 20, 21, 22, 23, 24).

These verses fully express the views of the Quran on the subject of toleration. The right and the wrong ways cannot be alike, but where there is blind attachment to some fallacious and outworn creed and method of life, no preaching can do any good. Yet the preacher should not be impatient or grow intolerant, for a warner's duty is but to preach. They who follow him should not be puffed up with pride at the idea that they are the seeing, the dwellers in the sunshine of Truth, the living who are not dead in spirit. They will get what they are earning: perhaps spiritual awakening is its own reward. But they must not come to consider themselves a chosen people, for where has there been a nation which has not been given, at one time or another, the truth from its Lord?

## CHAPTER IV

# COMPULSION IN RELIGION.

Enthusiasm often leads to persecution; and even noble ideals suffer by the intolerance of their advocates. The French Revolution was a noble fight for Liberty, Equality and Fraternity; but it ended in the most horrible terrorism on record in the history of the World. The nation which had risen to wipe out all persecution and tyranny committed the darkest deeds of cruelty and injustice. History has been repeating itself: and the Bolshevists and the Fascists have both established a close oligarchy to enforce their ideas of government and economics upon a more or less unwilling majority. Now the one has the equal distribution of wealth among the poor for its ideal and the other the preservation of national independence--both are praise worthy ideals, but there will be very few indeed who can conscientiously agree with their methods.



Now what is wrong with their methods? They believe in forcing their views upon others. Their theory is that they are in the right, and the others are totally in the wrong; and because it is truth only which will, and which deserves to prevail, they try to bring about its victory by force. They fail to realize that truth conquers by itself; it requires no force to conquer. These enthusiasts close their eyes to the fact that the other side is almost always equally convinced of its being on the right, and if every one party takes it into its head to enforce the truth by persecution, then, not only will all peace and amity be gone from the world, but the truth itself will perish. For Truth must be grasped, and if the mind is not free and unchained, it will never be able to grasp the truth. We have the example of the Middle Ages in Europe before us. The Church posed as the monopolizer of all truth, and therefore it condemned all free thinking. It persecuted the seekers of truth from sources other than its own. It is obvious that the motives of the Holy See and its agents were laudable; they wanted to save the souls of the millions under their care from everlasting perdition. But the result of all this care and persecution was very deplorable indeed. The days of the glory of the Roman Catholic Church were unfortunately the darkest days in the history of Europe. The Middle Ages

are proverbially the Dark Ages of Europe, and the Scarlet Woman—the saviour of Christianity—is responsible for it. The Renaissance saw the unfettering of the human mind, and though laxity and corruption were the immediate results, yet, after some time, real progress came in its wake.

Nowhere are the consequences of compulsion so harmful as in religion. A man very often cares more for his convictions than for his life. The result is that people prefer to lose their heads rather than their religion. Thus the persecuting faith suffers, the antagonism which it creates by its persecution becomes too strong for it to overcome. The enthusiast who persecutes others for the sake of his religion defeats his own ends. But the evil does not stop here. There are created rancour and hatred in the hearts of the persecuted which outlast centuries, and the relations of man and man are unnecessarily embittered. Thus, religion, instead of bringing solace and peace to humanity, brings discord and bitterness.

Islam understands this, and the Quran lays down in the clearest words that there should be no compulsion in religion:—

*“There is no compulsion in religion, truly the right way has become clearly distinct from error;*

*therefore whoever disbelieves in the devil and believes in Allah, he indeed has laid hold on the firmest handle, which shall not break off, and Allah is Hearing, Knowing."*  
( II: 256 ).

Here was laid down, thirteen centuries back, the doctrine which was to be grasped but slowly by the world. It is the golden maxim of toleration that the Quran teaches. The truth has been revealed, it must conquer of its own accord. Where is, then, the necessity of compelling people to see the light? Is light not distinct from darkness? If there are people who are either constitutionally unable to see the light or who deliberately shut their eyes to it, no amount of coercion will lead them to the right path. As a matter of fact, guidance never comes from outside; it always comes from within. The best preacher can only create an awakening in the heart. He can only touch the innermost chords of the heart by his fervent appeals; the real conversion takes place after a struggle within the heart itself. This struggle it is not in his power to bring about. Sometimes a word of truth works the miracle, but, at times, years of preaching will do nothing. Arguments can be both successful and unsuccessful. It is not uncommon to see men of very developed faculties and deep learning weltering in the darkest and the most ridiculous superstitions. This problem of religious con-

victions surpasses all human understanding, and none can dispute the truth of what the Quran says in this respect in the following verse:—

*“Now surely Allah makes err whom He pleases and guides aright whom He pleases, so let not your soul waste away in grief for them; surely Allah is cognizant of what they do”.*

(XXXV: 8).

“Allah makes err” does not mean that Allah deliberately misguides anyone; it only means that it is not in the power of mankind to instill truth into the mind of the misbeliever, and that guidance can come from Allah only. The Prophet was always filled with sorrow at the sight of people taking to evil ways and rejecting the truth. He not only preached his doctrines to them, but also earnestly prayed for them. His gentle nature could not bear the sight of men falling into the snares of Satan. But he was helpless. It was God and God alone who could work the necessary miracle. The miracle was wrought, as Islam was accepted by millions and millions of people within a very short time indeed; but it was made clear to the Prophet that he could only pray and preach: guidance would come from Allah only. This truth has been repeated several times; for instance, the following verses lay down the same principle in almost identical words:—

*therefore whoever disbelieves in the devil and believes in Allah, he indeed has laid hold on the firmest handle, which shall not break off, and Allah is Hearing, Knowing."*

( II: 256 ).

Here was laid down, thirteen centuries back, the doctrine which was to be grasped but slowly by the world. It is the golden maxim of toleration that the Quran teaches. The truth has been revealed, it must conquer of its own accord. Where is, then, the necessity of compelling people to see the light? Is light not distinct from darkness? If there are people who are either constitutionally unable to see the light or who deliberately shut their eyes to it, no amount of coercion will lead them to the right path. As a matter of fact, guidance never comes from outside; it always comes from within. The best preacher can only create an awakening in the heart. He can only touch the innermost chords of the heart by his fervent appeals; the real conversion takes place after a struggle within the heart itself. This struggle it is not in his power to bring about. Sometimes a word of truth works the miracle, but, at times, years of preaching will do nothing. Arguments can be both successful and unsuccessful. It is not uncommon to see men of very developed faculties and deep learning weltering in the darkest and the most ridiculous superstitions. This problem of religious con-

victions surpasses all human understanding, and none can dispute the truth of what the Quran says in this respect in the following verse:—

*“Now surely Allah makes err whom He pleases and guides aright whom He pleases, so let not your soul waste away in grief for them; surely Allah is cognizant of what they do”.*

(XXXV: 8).

“Allah makes err” does not mean that Allah deliberately misguides anyone; it only means that it is not in the power of mankind to instill truth into the mind of the misbeliever, and that guidance can come from Allah only. The Prophet was always filled with sorrow at the sight of people taking to evil ways and rejecting the truth. He not only preached his doctrines to them, but also earnestly prayed for them. His gentle nature could not bear the sight of men falling into the snares of Satan. But he was helpless. It was God and God alone who could work the necessary miracle. The miracle was wrought, as Islam was accepted by millions and millions of people within a very short time indeed; but it was made clear to the Prophet that he could only pray and preach: guidance would come from Allah only. This truth has been repeated several times; for instance, the following verses lay down the same principle in almost identical words:—

*"Whom Allah pleases, He causes to err, and whom He pleases He puts on the right path"*

(VI: 39)

*"Therefore (for) whomsoever Allah intends that He should guide him aright, He expands his heart for Islam, and (for) whomsoever He intends that He should cause him to err, He makes his breast strait and narrow"*

(VI: 126)

*"Say: The conclusive argument is for Allah (alone); so if he pleases, He will certainly guide you all"*

(VI: 150)

*"Whomsoever Allah guides, he is the one who follows the right way; and whomsoever He causes to err, these are the losers"*

(VII: 178)

*"Whomsoever Allah causes to err, there is no guide for him, and He leaves them alone in their inordinatness blindly wandering on"*

(VII: 186)

*"But if they dispute with you, say: I have submitted myself entirely to Allah and every one who follows me; and say to those who have been given the Book and the unlearned people; Do you submit yourselves? So if they submit, then indeed they follow the right way; and if they turn back, then upon you is only the delivery of the message and Allah sees the servants".*

(III: 19).

These verses will make it amply clear that guidance can come from Allah alone; and that no other power can make a soul see the light, therefore it would be sheer perversity and ignorance on the part of a believer in the Quran to compel people to accept Islam. He would know that compulsion cannot make anyone a believer. Belief can come only from within, from the heart, at the instigation of the Almighty. But a man may well ask, "But why does Allah cause a man to err"? This is a fair question, but the Quran answers it in other verses where it is clearly explained that Allah sends the prophets and makes the right path distinct from the wrong path. A man can see, but he does not like to see, he closes his eyes deliberately. These are men "on whose heart is a seal" which is not broken by the preaching of the prophets. Such men are those who doubt the truth of what they pretend to believe, yet they stick to it. And there are some who are, by nature, unable to see the truth. This is amply illustrated not only in religion, but in every day arguments as well, when it is absolutely impossible to induce a man to see the flaw in his opinions. This trait of character is natural, which in the terminology of the Quran, as well as other religious books, is the "act of God". Similarly, guidance comes to a soul after some of those miraculous experiences which change the very life of a man. How could



this idea be better expressed concisely and simply than by saying that it is Allah who "causes to err" and who "guides".†

And, therefore, however earnestly one may desire the victory of truth there must be no compulsion:—

*"And if your Lord had pleased, surely all those who are in the earth would have believed, all of them; will you then force men till they become believers"?*

*"And it is not for a soul to believe except by Allah's permission and He casts uncleanness (of misbelief) on those who will not understand".*

(X: 99,100).

The Prophet suffered greatly for the unbelievers: for his pure soul it was grievous indeed that man should disbelieve the truth after it had become apparent.

The only answer he gets is:—

*"Then may be you will kill yourself with grief, sorrowing after them, if they do not believe in this announcement".*

(XVIII: 6).

---

†This reminds one of the phrase in the Old Testament, "and God hardened their hearts".

---

No, it is not by sorrowing, nor by compulsion that truth can prosper, it is by patient work alone that the work can be done:—

*“And follow what is revealed to you, and be patient till Allah shall give judgment, and He is the best of the Judges”.* (X: 109).

(Judgment here means the judgment between truth and falsehood, and therefore the triumph of truth).

*“And be patient and your patience is not but by the assistance of Allah, and grieve not for them, and do not distress yourself at what they plan;*

*“Surely Allah is with those who guard (against evil) and those who do good (to others)”.*

(XVI: 127, 128).

*“And continue to remind”.* (II: 55).

*“Rely on Allah, surely you are on the clear truth”.*

•

The last verse shows that the very fact that one is on the right ensures ones success. This has been repeated several times in the Quran, and shows that there is no need of compulsion in preaching a true

religion; for truth is its own surety for success. The following verses also confirm the same view :—

*“Therefore be patient; surely the promise of Allah (to make truth triumph) is true”.*

(XXX: 60).

*“ The truth has come, and the falsehood shall vanish and shall not come back”.*

(XXXIV: 49)

*“The truth has come and the falsehood vanished; surely falsehood is a vanishing thing”.*

(XVII: 81).

A preacher can do nothing except preach the truth in order to bring about its victory, and this he should do unflinchingly :—

*“Therefore do remind (the people) ; surely reminding does profit”.*

(LXXXVII: 9).

But this preaching is to be done in the right way :—

*“Call to the way of your Lord with wisdom and goodly exhortation, and have disputations with them in the best manner ; surely your Lord best knows those who go astray from His path, and He knows best those who follow the right way.”*

(XVI: 125.)

The learned Moulvi Muhammad Ali in his commentary upon this verse says :—

“The principle laid down for preaching and religious controversy by the ‘unlearned Arabian’ has yet to be learnt by the most advanced people, whose controversies are carried on with no other object than that of fault-finding and whose preaching only aims at carping at others. It shows the breadth of mind of the Holy Prophet, more especially when it is remembered that the injunction was given at a time when the Muslims were being most severely persecuted and there was the greatest reason for adopting a harsh attitude.”

If all arguments fail, then, instead of resorting to compulsion, the preacher should say,

*“My work is for me and your work for you; you are clear of what I do and I am clear of what you do.”*

This verse is so appropriate that I would quote it with its full context. The Prophet is addressed :—

*“ And if they call you a liar, say : My work is for me and your work for you ; you are clear of what I do and I am clear of what you do.*

*“And there are those of them who hear you, but can you make the deaf to hear though they will not understand ?*

*“ And there are those of them who look at you, but can you show the way to the blind though they will not see ?*

*“Surely Allah does not do any injustice to men, but men are unjust to themselves.”*

(X: 41, 42, 43, 44.)

These verses show that a preacher should do his duty and leave the rest to Divine Providence. They, also, incidentally make clear the meaning of the verses in which Allah is spoken of as “causing to

In the same way a believer is asked to be tolerant in another chapter which reads :—

*“Say : O unbelievers !*

*“ I do not serve that which you serve,*

*“Nor do you serve Him whom I serve,*

*“Nor am I going to serve that which you serve,*

*“Nor are you going to serve Him whom I serve;*

*“For you is your religion, and for me mine.”*

(CIX: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6).

He is to say,

*"And in whatever you disagree, the judgment thereof is (in) Allah's (hand), that is Allah, my Lord, on Him do I rely and to Him do I turn time after time."*  
(XLII: 10).

*"To this then go on inviting, and go on steadfastly on the right way as you are commanded, and do not follow their low desires, and say :*

*"I believe in what Allah has revealed of the Book, and I am commanded to do justice between you ; Allah is our Lord and your Lord, we shall have our deeds and you shall have your deeds; no plea need there be (now after full discussion) between us and you, Allah will gather us together, and to Him is the return."*  
(XLII: 15).

Unfortunately the space at my command does not allow me to quote any more verses, but the few quoted here will have, I hope, conclusively proved that compulsion in religion is totally foreign to Islam. This was amply illustrated by the life of the Prophet who never obliged a soul to accept Islam against his will. The charter he gave to the Christians of Najran laying down that "their authority and rights shall not be interfered with, nor anything that

is customary amongst them, so long as they conducted themselves peaceably and uprightly"\* shows what were his principles. There are very few examples indeed of a religious leader becoming supreme in a land and leaving the people free to make their choice as to what they would believe, and Muhammad's is the most brilliant amongst them.

## CHAPTER V

# MISUNDERSTANDINGS REGARDING JIHAD.

Jihad is the most misunderstood doctrine of Islam. Not only have the non-Muslims a totally wrong conception of jihad, but even many a land-grabbing Muslim conqueror has interpreted or pretended to interpret the verses of the Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet in a way which is totally foreign to his real teachings. Therefore I will devote greater space to this topic.

Let me take the ambitious Muslim conquerors first. They wanted to win renown, power and wealth by conquering countries bordering on their own. No ruler can make any conquests unaided by his people. How could these rulers win their people to their cause? Even today when a government goes



is customary amongst them, so long as they conducted themselves peaceably and uprightly"\* shows what were his principles. There are very few examples indeed of a religious leader becoming supreme in a land and leaving the people free to make their choice as to what they would believe, and Muhammad's is the most brilliant amongst them.

## CHAPTER V

# MISUNDERSTANDINGS REGARDING JIHAD.

Jihad is the most misunderstood doctrine of Islam. Not only have the non-Muslims a totally wrong conception of jihad, but even many a land-grabbing Muslim conqueror has interpreted or pretended to interpret the verses of the Quran and the traditions of the Holy Prophet in a way which is totally foreign to his real teachings. Therefore I will devote greater space to this topic.

Let me take the ambitious Muslim conquerors first. They wanted to win renown, power and wealth by conquering countries bordering on their own. No ruler can make any conquests unaided by his people. How could these rulers win their people to their cause? Even today when a government goes

to war, it poisons the mind of the nation with false propaganda. The adversary is painted blacker than the Devil, and all means are used to assure the world in general, and the people in particular, that the enemy has left no alternative except that of taking up arms in "our own defence." Sometimes appeal is made to the thirst of glory of a nation, sometimes it is led to believe that the cause is noble, for which, therefore, it should make any sacrifice.

Though I am aware of the fact that Muslim history is free, to a remarkable extent, from deeds of tyranny and persecution, yet it would be idle to pretend that all Muslim rulers were angels and saints and not ordinary politicians. There were all sorts of kings—good and bad, corrupt and virtuous, noble and selfish. Politics too often lead men to do ignoble deeds. Persons of the most unspotted character in private life have been seen to adopt unfair means to be successful in their schemes. And many Muslim rulers were no exceptions to this rule. They wanted to embark on a career of conquest and they tried to get the full cooperation of their people. The worldly minded and sycophant mullah was at hand to serve the tyrant. The real theologian of independent character was silenced by all sorts of means. There are cases on record when too honest ulema have been poisoned or otherwise removed from the

scene. Little wonder, therefore, that the sacred name of jihad was very often prostituted for the sake of mere mundane, aggressive wars.

Of this wrong use of the word "jihad" one may quote innumerable instances. When Timur the Lame invaded India, he was making a war of aggression against a country governed by fellow Muslims; yet he contrived to get a fatwa to the effect that he was making a jihad in order to get supporters for the campaign. Nadir Shah as well pretended that he was invading India to preserve the Muslim power from tottering down to its fall. Ibni Saud's followers fought against their fellow Muslims of Hedjaz, and called it a jihad. Indeed few Muslim rulers have fought without calling their wars jihad.

This continuous propaganda by the different rulers had a very unfortunate effect upon the mentality of the man in the street. Every war was called a jihad : therefore he began to associate the very idea of war with jihad. But the learned and the thoughtful never fell into this snare. The Quran has ever been preserved in its purity, and so have been all the important sayings of the Holy Prophet, hence the more independent ulema ever revolted against this tampering with the spirit and teachings of Islam.

There has been one good point in the history of Islam. People have misinterpreted the verses of the Quran, but they have never tried to make changes or interpolations in them. The result has been that every succeeding generation has been able to see the Truth as it was revealed to Muhammad (upon whom be peace and blessings). Today ninety-nine percent of educated Muslims understand the true significance of jihad, as did the early Muslims before the continued misinterpretation of the doctrine by selfish rulers and politicians.

Under the circumstances I have narrated, it would be unfair to throw stones at poor non-Muslims—very few of whom could have first hand information. They heard the Muslims calling every war a jihad, and they could not help thinking that every war—whether just or unjust—had religious sanction behind it.

But this was not the only cause. The word 'Jihad'\* comes from the word "Jahada"† and therefore 'Jihad' in its literal sense is 'to endeavour'. The Quran uses the word in both its senses. At places this is obvious, and men like Sale and Rodwell have translated it as 'strive' or 'endeavour.' But at other places this is not so clear, therefore, there arises some ambiguity, though a little thought and

✽ †

✽ †

reference to the context would leave no room for doubt. And the Western critic is very often so much obsessed with his notions of Islam teaching war and bloodshed that he very often jumps at the wrong conclusion. The word 'qital' is used in very few places ; where it is used, there can be no room for doubt, because 'qital' is 'killing'. It will be shown in the following pages that wherever there is a clear order for fighting in the Quran, it is based on the soundest reasons.

Apart from the above, and a general prejudice against Muslims explained elsewhere, there is a more subtle reason for this misunderstanding. Christianity, Buddhism, Jainism, and certain schools of Hinduism condemn all violence. To them the use of force in itself is a sin. When the followers of these religions saw a new faith allowing, nay, ordaining a moderate use of force, they thought that it ordained bloodshed and war. It was difficult for a man considering all kinds of violence sinful to conceive that there did exist some use for it in the universe which was not unholy and sacrilegious.

Add to these causes the propaganda carried on intensively in Europe and elsewhere against the Moor, the Turk, or the Moghal for political purposes, and it will not astonish any man that the doctrine of jihad is so sadly misunderstood !

## CHAPTER VI

# THE ETHICS OF FORCE.

A razor can cut the throat ; electricity will kill a man ; fire burns down houses and cities ; water destroys whole tracts of inhabited and cultivated land ; and winds uproot fruit-bearing trees and blow away the shelter-giving thatches of the poor. But we can hardly do without razors, electricity, or fire today, while life would certainly be impossible without water and air. Energy and force, of whatsoever kind, are not bad in themselves ; it is their use which makes them productive or destructive. It is the glory of man that he rules over blind forces of nature and uses them to his advantage ; and it is owing to this control over force that the world has made such a wonderful progress in science and civilization.

But God has given some energy to the human body as well. He would be a crank who

would ask us to let this energy rust owing to disuse. All the capabilities of men are to be tapped and used to his advantage. And physical force is no exception. Gone are the days indeed when some people could look with approbation upon monks drying themselves with thirst or starving themselves to death. Humanity now recognizes what a great gift of God is this body to us, and therefore it is looked after with greater care, and the development of physical force is receiving plenty of consideration.

This force should not be a mere ornamental superficiality; it is a reality and should be counted as such. God has given us strength not only to enable us to earn our livelihood, but to save our lives from destruction as well. Fighting in self-defence can be no sin. If it is a sin to destroy our body by committing suicide, it can be no virtue to give ones life without a blow. It is, on the other hand, certainly a deadly sin to fall a victim to a tyrant without opposition.

Those who condemn all kinds of violence cannot face its logical consequences. What shall I do if a snake, or say, a wolf attacks me? Shall I stand silent and motionless, and do nothing to save myself? What shall I do when a mad dog attacks an innocent child? What is my duty if a defenceless



woman is attacked by rogues and stands in the danger of being violated ? Shall I not save a weak man from being robbed? Should I not fight a cruel robber who has respect neither for property nor for life? What shall I do with a thief who is not courteous enough to betake himself to the police station at my humble request ?

And we must not forget that there are individual thieves and nation-thieves, that there are individuals who rob and there are nations who rob. Similarly there are individuals who are robbed or beaten or killed, and there are nations which are maltreated. History shows us that an enduring, patient people corrupts both itself and its persecutors. What shall it, then, do? I think it is far better to repel force by force and die in the attempt than to yield to servitude and become worse than beasts !

There is one thing more which we cannot forget: that the ultimate appeal is always to force. This is no place to discuss principles of Political Science ; but one would be in good company if one were to say that the state is based upon force. At least this cannot be denied: that force is one of the most essential characteristics of the state ; without force no state can exist. If the malefactor against society cannot be punished, what is the use of a

state? The individual agrees to submit to the authority of the state, only because by giving up some of his rights he gains protection. A state without force cannot protect, and, therefore, it will not command obedience or submission.

But the protection that the state with some force at its command can give to individuals is unknown to nations : so far as they are concerned, there exists even today, inspite of the League of Nations and other international organizations, a state of anarchy in the world. For them existence is impossible without the possession of force. And it is due to this that inspite of doctrines to the contrary preached by different religions, it has not been possible for any nation organized into a state to ignore force. Even now it is difficult to foresee a time when force will be no longer necessary to defend a people's integrity. If there ever dawns that millennium upon the Earth when the days of war and aggression will be gone, then the doctrine of jihad will automatically fall into disuse, for the doctrine of jihad is nothing but the doctrine of self preservation. But that day seems to be as far off as ever, though Islam is as enthusiastic in bringing it about as any other religion.

I have said above that the ultimate appeal is always to force. It may or may not be the right

method of settling affairs—very probably it is not—yet humanity knows nothing better. Your law-courts would be 'useless if the force of the state were not behind them. This does not mean that human nature is essentially depraved and would hear no argument except that of force ; but there are mentalities and mentalities. No one can deny that there is a considerable percentage of humanity whose minds are constitutionally unable to see the use of following the right path. This may be due to mental diseases, bad training, heredity, or all of these ; but the fact remains that there are such natures, and it is necessary to keep them in control. While there exists the temptation of reaching the goal of wealth and power by the short cut of treachery, theft, or aggression, there are minds which will fall a prey to it. It is this characteristic of the human mind which makes an appeal to force necessary.

Now there is something which makes this appeal to force obnoxious: it is the idea that the wrong side may win. If the wrong-doer were always to be punished, if the right were always to triumph, then this method of settling disputes would be as correct and unblamable as the resort to a court of law. There are ever present chances of a wrong judgment

in a court of law as well, but the stakes are not so tremendous, nor are the chances of miscarriage of justice so great as in an appeal to force. What would justify the latter can be only some contrivance by which this possibility of a wrong judgment shall be eliminated.

This would be possible not by prohibiting force altogether, but allowing its use only when ones cause is just. A total prohibition of force will naturally result in disobedience, because what can the oppressed do, if not fight, in the last resort? When a doctrine is found to conflict with the law of existence, it will not be obeyed. And what is more, it will result in a general disregard for moderation, and even law. Therefore the right thing would be to preach that force is to be considered a divine gift, and as such, a sacred trust to be used only for the sake of justice. It should never be prostituted for aggression or injustice. It is a weapon for protection, not destruction. And more than this, it is too sacred a weapon to be used without thought. If used at all, it should be used only in the last resort. When all other attempts have failed and some great injustice is still crying for redress, then, and then only, is it to be used.

What has been said so far will now have shown, I hope, that force in itself is not bad, and

those religions which have condemned it wholesale have condemned something which is not only useful, but even necessary in life. It was unnatural to expect humanity to eschew all force, therefore no religion has ever succeeded in inducing its followers to give up the use of force. The function of all codes of ethics should be to regularize and control the use of force for the good of humanity, for upon force depends the peace of the world. But because an appeal to force is a dangerous thing, therefore it must be made in the last resort, and only by people whose cause is just. To fight for justice or the protection of the weak and the oppressed can be no sin ; on the other hand it is commendable. It is no sound argument to say that force should be discarded because it can be misused. There are so many good things that can be misused. The golden rule is not to eschew them, but to learn their correct use, for God has not created them in vain.

If this much be granted, it is not difficult for me to show that the Islamic jihad is the soundest use of force in international relations while there remains the necessity of using force in them. If force falls into disuse, it will be obvious that jihad itself will become unnecessary, though any one knowing the most elementary Psychology will see that this is impossible.

## CHAPTER VII

### JIHAD IN THEORY.

I have laid down certain principles in the last chapter which can justify the use of force. In this chapter I will quote verses from the Quran and traditions of the Holy Prophet to show that the principles which I have laid down are exactly those upon which the doctrine of jihad is essentially based.

The first requisite is patience, one should not hurry in going to war, but must first exhaust all other resources. This is clearly enjoined in the following verses ;—

*“And for the sake of your Lord be patient”.*

(LXXIV: 7).

*“Consider the succession of ages,*

*“Most surely man is in loss,*

*“Except those who believe, and do good and enjoin on each other truth, and enjoin on each other patience”.* (CIII: 1, 2, 3).

*“(Paradise is for) those who guard against evil and those who spend (benerolently) in ease as well as in straitness, and those who restrain their anger and pardon men ; and Allah loves the doers of good to others”.* (III: 133).

*“Surely the men who submit and the women who submit, believing men and the believing women, and the truthful men and the truthful women, and the patient men and the patient women, and the humble men and the humble women, and the almsgiving men and the almsgiving women, and the fasting men and the fasting women, and the men who guard their private parts and the women who guard (their private parts), and the men who remember Allah much and the women who remember (Allah much)—Allah has prepared for them forgiveness and a mighty reward”.* (XXXIII: 35).

*“..... Only the patient will be paid back their reward in full without measure”.* (XXXIX: 10).

*“And those who shun the great sins and indecencies, and whenever they are angry they forgive”.*

*“The way (to blame) is only against them who oppress men and revolt in the earth unjustly; these shall have a painful chastisement.* ❧

*“And whoever is patient and forgiving, that most surely is of the affairs the doing of which should be determined upon”.* (XLI: 42, 43).

*“O you who believe! be patient and vie in endurance and remain steadfast, and be careful of your duty to Allah, that you may be successful”.*  
(III: 199).

Not only has patience been so strongly recommended and enjoined that it would not allow hasty action, but war has been plainly discouraged:—

*“Yet surely your Lord with respect to those who fly after they are persecuted, then they struggle hard and are patient, most surely your Lord after that is Forgiving, Merciful”.* (XVI: 110).

*“And the (good) servants of the Beneficent God are those who walk on the earth in humility, and*



*when the ignorant addresss them (insolently), they say,  
Peace".* (XXV: 63).

*"And they who do not call upon another god  
with Allah and do not slay the soul which Allah has  
forbidden except in the requirements of justice, and  
who do not commit fornication, and who does this  
shall find a requital of sin".*

(XXV: 68).

*"These shall be rewarded with high places  
because they were patient, and shall be met therein  
with greetings and salutation,*

*"Abiding therein; goodly the abode and the  
resting place !"* (XXV: 75, 76).

*"And do not obey the bidding of the extravagant,*

*"Who make mischief in the land and do not  
act aright."* (XXVI: 151, 152).

Arbitration is definitely encouraged :—

*"So be careful of your duty to Allah, and set  
aright matters of your difference".*

(VIII: 1).

*"There is no good in most of their secret counsels except (in his) who enjoins charity or goodness or reconciliation between people ; and whoever does this, seeking Allah's pleasure, We will give him a mighty reward".* (IV: 114).

The prophet once said to his companions, "Shall I inform you of the deed which is better than prayers, fasting, and alms?" The companions said, "Surely". The Prophet replied, "It is to make peace between men—one who creates dissensions perishes".

The Prophet is reported to have said, "Abstain from causing dissensions, because this obliterates good deeds". (Mishkat).

Omni Kalsum says, "I heard from the Prophet of God that he who makes peace between men and says a good word, or bears a good news (for peace) is on the right path". (Mishkat).

The prophet said:—"The least charity is to make peace amongst men". (Mishkat).

The prophet said to Abu Ayyub, "Shall I tell you of a charitable deed which would please Allah and his Prophet? Make peace between men when they are fighting, and unite them when they are disunited". (Kinz).

Thus a Muslim is to do all that he can do to avoid war himself and to induce others to avoid it. But if he is forced, he can fight :—

*“And fight in the way of Allah with those who fight with you, and do not exceed the limits; surely Allah does not love those who exceed the limits”.*

(II, 190).

It would be worth while to quote the commentary upon this verse by the learned Moulvie Muhammad Ali:—

“Rabi and Ibni Zaid are of opinion that this verse is the earliest revelation regarding the permission to fight. (Imam Fakhruddin Razi) A remarkable point about the injunction to fight in the way of Allah is that it is very often mentioned in connection with the subject of pilgrimage, as here and in the 3rd and 22nd chapters.† From this circumstance may be concluded what is clearly stated many times, viz., that fighting was permitted or ordained as a measure of self defence and to put a stop to religious persecution, the pilgrimage to Mecca which is one of the four fundamental principles of Islam, being impossible so long as the holy place

† Of the holy Quran.

was in the hands of unbelievers, who had driven the Muslims from Mecca by cruel persecutions.

"The first restriction to which fighting in the way of Allah is made subject is that the Muslims should fight only against those 'who are fighting against you'. These words so clearly show that the Muslim wars were a measure of self defence that they need no comment. It shows that the enemy had first taken up arms with the object of extirpating Islam, and this fact is borne out by history ; it was only after this that the Muslims were allowed to fight. This restriction further shows that women, children, and old men who could not take up arms against the Muslims were not to be molested. (Imam Fakhruddin Razi) A similar exception was also made in favour of monks and hermits. And under the new conditions, the civil population of towns and villages would be treated similarly, for only those are to be fought against who actually take part in fighting. The second restriction is that the Muslims should not exceed the limits of the necessity of war. This direction was the sore need of a community which had been subjected to the cruellest persecutions and the severest tortures at the hands of tyrants, who had neither a law nor any authority over them which should keep them within bounds.

The Muslims would have been quite within their rights if in case of victory they had taken their revenge upon their persecutors. But they were warned beforehand that they should not exceed the limit of the bare necessity of the war.

“These directions were faithfully followed by the Muslims. They were by no means the aggressors. In the very first important battle they were forced to fight against an army advancing upon Medina, and which was only three days’ journey from that city. And in all their fighting they only killed or captured the armed foes, and never harmed undefended women and children or old men, though their own women and children had been mercilessly put to death by their persecutors. If they had done so, they would have gone beyond the necessity of war and exceeded the previously prescribed limits.

“It should be noted that it is this *defensive fighting* which is called *fighting in the way of Allah*. Fighting for the propagation of the faith is not once mentioned in the whole of the Quran and is solely the product of the inventive brains of Christian missionaries. The hatred which Islam had for fighting is shown by the fact that the Muslims were not allowed to fight until the very existence of Islam was in danger. The excuses for which wars are

undertaken in civilized countries had long existed in the case of the Muslims, but such excuses were deemed insufficient.

“The injunctions relating to fighting are given in this chapter to show their lenity as contrasted with the Israelite law. The first point of contrast is that in Israelite law fighting was ordained to turn a people out of a land of which they had been the rightful owners for centuries : it was not the enemy who had taken up the sword first ; whereas in Islam the Muslims were forbidden to fight except against those who first took up the sword. The second point of difference lies in the treatment of the enemy. The Muslims were forbidden to go beyond the bare necessity of the war, and thus not only women, children, and old men were always safe in their fighting, but even the enemy’s habitations, their gardens and their tillage and everything else, were equally safe. In the Jewish wars, however, men, women, and children were all put to death and cities were destroyed. In fact the Jewish wars were wars of extermination, while the Muslim wars were undertaken as a defensive measure against extermination by the enemy”.

Moulana Muhammad Ali has given the theory of jihad in a nutshell : and therefore I have quoted

him at length. The next verse which is to be read together with the first, conclusively lays down that jihad is to be in self defence only :—

*“And kill them (who fight against you) wherever you find them, and drive them out from where they drove you out, and persecution is severer than slaughter.....”* (II. 191).

This is reinforced by the following :—

*“And whoever defends himself after his being oppressed, these it is against whom there is no way (to blame) ;*

*“The way (to blame) is only against those who oppress men and revolt in the earth unjustly; these shall have a painful chastisement”. (XLII: 41, 42).*

*“(The good are) they, therefore, who fled and were turned out of their homes and persecuted in My way and who fought and were slain.....”*  
(III: 194).

These verses clearly show that the enemy is to be driven out from the land he has wrongfully seized and where he is persecuting Musalmans. That the war is not to be prolonged indefinitely to exter-

minate the enemy is clear from the verses which follow :—

*“But if they desist, then surely Allah is Forgiving and Merciful”.* (II: 192).

*“And fight with them (who fight with you) until there is no persecution, and religion should be only for Allah; but if they desist, then there should be no hostility except against those who (still) oppress”.* (II: 193).

“Religion should be only for Allah” may cause some misunderstanding in the mind of the unwary, therefore it must be fully understood that the words mean that no earthly power may take it upon itself to enforce its ideals and faith upon others, and that there may arise a state of affairs in which a man may be able to follow the religion which he thinks will satisfy the inner craving of his soul and please God. A man’s religion should be only for God and for no one else. Thus what may be construed as implying an order to fight for enforcing Islam upon an unwilling world is really an injunction to fight for the prevalence of the principles of the broadest toleration. The fact that this is the right sense of the words is confirmed by other teachings of Islam which abhors any compulsion. in



religion. This contention is also borne out by the early history of Islam. The unbelievers of Mecca and other places had determined to force Muslims back to heathenism, and it was in the face of this determination that the above order was given. This is made clear in the following :—

*“They ask you concerning the sacred month—about fighting in it, Say: Fighting in it is a grave matter; and hindering (men) from Allah’s way and denying Him and (hindering men from) the sacred mosque and turning its people out of it are still graver than slaughter, and they will not cease fighting with you until they turn you back from your religion, if they can.....”* (II: 217).

*“If they find you, they will be your enemies, and will stretch forth towards you their hands and their tongues with evil, and they ardently desire that you may disbelieve”.* (LX: 2).

This verse of course implies that the unbelievers were ready to use not only persuasion but persecution as well to make the Muslims change their religion.

That a Muslim is to fight for religious toleration and not for the forcible conversion of others to Islam is clear from the following verses as well:—

*"Permission (to fight) is given to those upon whom war is made, because they are oppressed, and most surely Allah is well able to assist them;*

*"Those who have been expelled from their homes without a just cause except that they say: Our Lord is Allah. And had there not been Allah's repelling some people by others, certainly there would have been pulled down cloisters and churches and synagogues and mosques in which Allah's name is remembered much, and surely Allah will help him who helps His cause; most surely Allah is Strong, Mighty;*

*"Those who, should We establish them in the land, will keep up prayer and pay the poor rate and enjoin good and forbid evil; and Allah's is the end of affairs".*

(XXII: 39, 40, 41).

These verses are an excellent commentary upon the words 'till religion be for Allah'. Had Allah not enjoined jihad—had there been "no repelling of some people by others"—there could not be that tolerance which is the only guarantee of religious freedom which should be so dear to a Muslim that he should be ready to lay down his life not only to secure it for himself, but for others as well. He is not to fight for mosques only, but for 'cloisters and churches and synagogues' as well—in short, he must

be ready to defend the sanctity of all the places where the name of the Almighty is mentioned. Could there exist a greater inducement to toleration? To revert once again to the problem of minimum violence, the following verses show that war is not to be prolonged merely for the sake of precaution:—

*“Say to those who disbelieve, if they desist, that which is past shall be forgiven to them; and if they return (to hostilities), then what happened to the ancient (oppressors and fighters against Truth) is quite at hand (i. e. they are doomed). (VIII: 38).*

*“And if they incline to peace, then incline to it and trust in Allah; surely He is the Hearing and the Knowing;*

*“And if they intend to deceive you—then surely Allah is sufficient for you; He it is who strengthened you with his help and with the believers;*

*“And united their hearts; had you spent all that is in the earth, you could not have united their hearts, but Allah united them, surely He is Mighty, Wise.*

*“O Prophet ! Allah is sufficient for you and (for) such of the believers as follow you”.*

*(VIII: 61, 62, 63, 64).*

Again—

*“And if they intend to act unfaithfully towards you so indeed they acted unfaithfully towards Allah before, but He gave (you) mastery over them; and Allah is Knowing, Wise”.* (VIII: 71).

Nothing could be more clear than this. Nothing was to be made the pretext of prolonging a war when the enemy had offered peace—not even the consideration that the enemy might just be wanting to get breathing time to renew his energy. Had God not done wonders for Muslims? He would do the same if they acted according to His injunctions, and remained forbearing and just.

The high ideals for which a Muslim is asked to fight are really worth fighting for, and there will be hardly any sensible person who will not agree with the spirit of the following beautiful verse:—

*“And what has happened to you that you would not fight in the way of Allah and of the weak among the men and the women and the children, of those who say: Our Lord ! Cause us to go forth from this town, whose people are oppressors and give us from Thee a guardian and give us from Thee a helper !”*

(IV: 75).

A Musalman should always fight for justice, he is not worth his salt if he fights for injustice:—

*“Those who believe fight in the way of Allah, and those who disbelieve fight in the way of the Devil. Fight therefore against the friends of the Devil; surely the struggle of the Devil is but weak”.* (IV:76).

This is but another way of saying that the believer should ever fight for the right cause; it is the Devil, not the believer in God, who would fight for an unjust cause. This is reinforced by the following stern saying of the Prophet—

“He who fights for a cause about which he does not know whether it is righteous, and who is angry owing to partiality only and induces others to fight for the same reason shall die a non-Muslim if he is killed therein”. (Mishkat: Abu Hurera).

It was perhaps to stop Muslims from hastily joining a cause which might be unjust, that the Prophet said, “O people ! Be moderate ! Be moderate!! Be moderate!!!” (Kinz : Jabir).

It should have become quite clear from the above that every unbeliever is not to be considered the enemy of Islam; but if there be lurking any

doubt even now, it ought to be removed by the following:—

*“O you who believe ! When you go to war in Allah’s way, make investigations, and do not say to any one who offers you peace: You are not a believer. Do not seek goods of this world’s life ! But with Allah there are abundant gains; you too were such aforetime, then Allah conferred a benefit upon you, therefore make investigations; surely Allah is averse of what you do”.* (IV:94).

This verse means that Muslims are not to take every unbeliever to be their enemy, but they must make investigations. They should not kill unbelievers simply because they are unbelievers and have not accepted the Faith, but those of them only who have persecuted them. Surely before the early Muslims themselves were converted, they were unbelievers, and who would have become believers if the non-believers were all extirpated and their goods seized by the handful of believers who first accepted Islam! History shows that some of the most enthusiastic Muslims, like the great caliph Omar, were enthusiastic unbelievers before they accepted the Truth. In every non-believer, therefore, there is a potential believer, and therefore he should not be

---

killed if he is innocent of open hostility and war against Islam.

Even when it has become absolutely necessary to fight, mercy should not be forgotten:—

*“So when you meet in battle those who disbelieve, then smite their necks until when you have overcome them, then make (them) prisoners, and afterwards either set them free as a favour or let them ransom (themselves) until the war ends”.* (XLVII: 4).

The opponents are not to be butchered when it is possible to take them prisoners, killing is to be reduced to the necessary minimum. No non-combatants are to be killed whatsoever. The prisoners of war are to be humanely treated, it is better if they are set free as a favour, but if circumstances do not allow this, they are to be allowed to ransom themselves until the war ends, after which, of course, they are to be set free.

The following traditions of the Prophet show how a jihad is to be conducted :—

“Do not kill women or labourers”.

(Ibni Majah).

“Do not kill old men, nor women, nor children”.

(Bukhari: Ibni Omar).

“Do not kill children or monks of monastries”.  
(Ibni Abbas).

Uns reports that whenever the Prophet went out to fight, he never attacked a people in the night and always waited for morning.

Peace and amity are to continue with the people who do not fight :—

*“Allah does not forbid you respecting those who have not made war against you on account of your religion, and have not driven you forth from your homes that you show them kindness and deal with them justly, surely Allah loves the doers of justice.*

*“Allah only forbids you respecting those who made war upon you on account of your religion, and drove you forth from your homes and backed up others in your expulsion that you make friends with them and whoever makes friends with them, these are unjust”.*

(LX: 8, 9).

I hope I have been able to show that the jihad ordained by Islam entirely fulfils the conditions laid down in the previous chapter under which alone the use of force can be justified. A Musalman can fight only in self defence, and for a just cause, and what is more important, only as the last resort. He is to use only the minimum of force which is required in enforcing justice, and should ever be ready to



stop fighting when there is made an offer of peace from the other side. Wars are to be conducted as humanely as possible, and no non-combatants are to suffer. A Muslim should be ready to defend the poor and the weak from oppression and all places of worship from desecration, and to fight for this noble cause. He should fight against oppression, and to establish justice and the broadest principles of religious toleration. Surely, if God has not created force in vain, if there is a purpose behind its existence in the world, Islam has given us the right use of it, and no religion could do more. The world has never been able to dispense with force; this shows that it can, perhaps, never be dispensed with. It is a mighty weapon which should be used with wisdom and discretion which, to my mind, consists in using it according to the law of Islam.

## CHAPTER VIII

### JIHAD IN PRACTICE.

The title of this chapter is perhaps a little misleading, because I do not want to ransack the whole of Muslim history and prove that Muslim wars were always made in the right spirit. I abstain from doing this, not only because the size of this treatise would not allow it, but also because I do not pretend that there have not been Muslim kings and warriors who have waged totally unjust wars and thus defied the teachings of Islam. What I mean to do in this chapter is simply this: I want to show that no war waged by the Prophet or his great caliphs was against the precepts laid down in the Quran and that all the high sounding ideals preached in the Book were not so many pieces of cant. This I intend to do because it will show that the verses quoted by me were understood by Muslims

from the earliest times to bear the interpretation which I have given them.

#### A—THE WARS WAGED BY THE PROPHET.

For full thirteen years had the Prophet patiently borne the persecution of the Meccans. He had been insulted, pelted with stones, and assaulted; his followers had shared his privations and difficulties and maltreatment at the hands of the enemies of the Truth. But he had carried on his noble work of emancipating humanity from the clutches of ignorance and darkness. The Quraish had tried their best to make life a hell for the Muslims; they had to leave their home and hearth and seek refuge in foreign lands. And yet they did not succeed in exhausting the Prophet's patience; he would not retaliate! This sublime patience of the Prophet and his success in winning converts in ever increasing numbers so exasperated his enemies that they conspired to take his life. Yet the Prophet would not even raise his little finger to save himself; and his enemies went on hatching conspiracies against his life. Till, at last, the odds against him grew too many; most of his followers had taken refuge in Abyssinia, and he was left alone with only a handful of friends. This encouraged the Quraish who held a big conference in the 'Darulnadwa' or the House of Assembly.

It was proposed that the Prophet should be imprisoned in a cellar and starved to death. Another proposal was to exile him. But the Assembly would run no risks. It, therefore, accepted Abu Jahl's suggestion that stalwart youths of noble descent be selected from the Quraish families and armed with sharp swords. These young men were to fall upon the Prophet and kill him. This would at once make the Prophet's death certain and any revenge by his friends impossible. The Prophet was informed of this, and he escaped from Mecca to Medina. Even then, the Quraish would not let him alone. A reward of a hundred camels was proclaimed for the man who would bring the Prophet a captive before his inveterate enemies; but in spite of many difficulties, the Prophet succeeded in reaching Medina.

Even here he was not left in peace. Abdullah bin Ubayy, a chief of Medina with immense influence, was instigated to expel the Muslims from the city. Abdullah, though hostile to Islam, refrained from doing this only because he was not sure of his success, as many of his followers had turned Muslims. The Quraish then began to incite the tribes round about Medina to hostility against Islam. They enjoyed the prestige of being the custodians

of the Holy Temple at Mecca, and therefore their propaganda was not likely to miscarry. More specially they concentrated their attention on the tribes lying between Mecca and Medina.

They did not stop here; but they carried on marauding expeditions right up to Medina. Once a party carried off cattle from the very precincts of the town. Then, emboldened by their success, they prepared for an incursion upon Medina. At this juncture the Muslims were allowed to defend themselves :—

*“Permission is granted to them against whom war is waged, because they have been tyrannized”.*  
(XXII, 39).

*“Fight in the way of Allah against those who fight against you; and do not transgress the limits”.*  
(II: 190).

The Prophet tried to counteract the activities of the Quraish by hunting for defensive alliances with his neighbouring tribes, and sending parties to defend his allies and their fields. One such party, under Abdullah bin Jahsh met a party of the Quraish, and in a skirmish that followed, one Abdullah bin Hazrami, a Quraishite, was killed. The Prophet

reprimanded his men, because his instructions to this party were to abstain from fighting. According to the then prevailing law in Arabia, the relations of the deceased ought to have either taken revenge upon Abdullah ibn Jabsh or demanded blood money from him. But the Quraish found the pretext they had been waiting for all this time. They wanted nothing short of the extirpation of the Muslims, and therefore, after a preparation of full two months, they marched against Medina in Ramzan, A. H. 2. This army consisted of 1,000 veteran Arab fighters, fully armed and equipped—some of whom were the most renowned soldiers of the land. Against these were hurriedly placed in the field 313 ill armed followers of the Prophet including boys and aged men—a testimony to the fact that the Prophet could not have entertained any idea of aggression. Indeed so nervous were some of the weaker brethren that the Quran describes their mental condition in the following words:--

*“A party of the believers were surely averse  
.....as if they were being driven to death”.*

(VIII: 5,6).

Even on the battle-field, the Muslims desisted from dealing the first blow and thus proving the aggressors.

After this cruel ordeal, through which the Muslims came out triumphant and victorious, they did not lose their magnanimity. The prisoners of war were treated kindly; indeed some Muslims gave the best food in the house to their captive guests while they themselves lived upon the frugal meal of dates and barley. The poor were released free, the literate were required to teach ten Muslim children how to read and write, and the rest had to pay a moderate ransom. This was the Prophet's treatment of his worst enemies—persons who had terribly persecuted [him and conspired to kill him, and who had driven him and his inoffending followers from their homes into exile. One of the worst offenders was brought before him: some one recommended that the prisoner ought to be mutilated to prevent him from further imschief. The Prophet replied with characteristic generosity, "If I disfigure any of his limbs, God will disfigure mine!"

The proud and powerful Quraish could ill bear  
Unl. the shame of a crushing defeat by the the contemptible little band of Muslims. As most of the chiefs had fallen at Badr, Abu Sufyan was elected the leader and solemnly swore to take revenge upon 'the heretics'. The profit of a Syrian venture was set aside for the purpose, and an army of

3,000 soldiers including 200 cavalry and 700 veterans was collected. A year after Badr, this force marched upon Medina. Women accompanied the army in the orthodox Arab fashion to cheer up the soldiers. This army easily took possession of the pastures of Medina and did great harm to the crops. The Prophet summoned his friends to ask their opinion as to the best course to be adopted. They decided upon marching against the foe, but when this little army of 1,000 came in sight of the enemy, the leader of the 'hypocrites'—Abdullah bin Ubayy deserted with his 300 men according to a previous plan. The remaining 700 pitched themselves against the invaders. Owing to the mistake of a group of archers acting against the orders of the Prophet, the Muslims sustained heavy losses, and even the Prophet was wounded. But the battle was a drawn affair; the Quraishites marched off, leaving the Muslims so much the masters of the situation that they gave chase to the enemy the next day. But the Quraish had shown their innate ferocity. Hinda, a woman, tore out the liver of Hamza, the Prophet's uncle, and chewed it and garlanded herself with a wreath made of his internal organs. Even these brutal deeds did not embitter the Prophet. While arrows were being showered upon him, he was praying, "O Allah! Forgive my people, because they are in ignorance



and do not know what they do." This was the true spirit of jihad: the Prophet had to protect his persecuted followers, but he would do nothing more—not even pray against his inveterate foes.

The battle of Uhud greatly weakened the Arab Tribes. Muslims. Many of this brave but scanty band fell, among whom were some of their most distinguished leaders. The Arab tribes round about Mecca who had been viewing with jealousy the rise of a new power hostile to their most cherished customs and gods now saw their opportunity of crushing it. The Prophet found that the Muslims were in danger of being extirpated, but he did not take aggressive steps even to ward off this danger.

The Jews of Medina were the first to conspire with the Quraish. They were aided by the 'hypocrites' whose hostility was the more dangerous because they were Muslims in appearance and therefore knew well how to attack the true followers of the Prophet. Indeed they made life so unbearable for the Muslims that they could not part with their arms at any time: a report tells us that they even went to bed fully armed. The neighbouring tribes added treachery to their hostility. Abu Bara, the chief of the tribes of Banu Amir and Banu Sulaim came to the Prophet and requested him to send some

of his disciples to preach Islam to his people. The Prophet suspected treachery, but at the repeated requests of the chief he sent 70 of his best preachers. At Biri Maa'una they were surrounded by a large army and put to the sword, only one 'Amru Umayya managed to escape to inform the Prophet of what had happened.

The same fate befell another set of theologians at Rafi', all of whom were killed after a brave defence. These perfidious deeds so upset the Prophet that he thought of praying for chastisement for these traitors, but it was revealed to him:—

*"You have no concern in the affair whether He turns to them mercifully or chastises them, surely they are unjust".* (III: 127).

The Prophet refrained from cursing, but his tolerance was little appreciated by the tribes. They were not satisfied with killing a few preachers or showing their hostility in other petty ways, therefore they began to gather armies and made preparations to march upon Medina. The Prophet stood on the defence and defeated one army after another in several skirmishes. The most important of these was the Battle of Muraisi' where the Banu-Mustaliq

fought under their leader Haris bin Abi Zirur and were defeated.

But this did not break the spirit of the The Battle of the warlike Arabs. A grand alliance was Allies. formed in which the Quraish, the Jews, and the Bedouins aided by some treacherous Medinite tribes combined to crush Islam. A large army consisting of about twenty-four thousand warriors marched upon Medina. The Prophet decided to defend his position by digging a ditch at the suggestion of Salman the Persian—a seeker after truth who had found the object of his search in Islam. So meagre were the resources of Muslims that the Prophet and some of his disciples were actually starving; they had not touched food for a couple of days before they had to work hard at digging the ditch. Yet Islam had given them radiant hope, for, covered with earth and sweat in the hot climate of Arabia, they were singing:—

“O Allah! Had it not been for Thy mercy, we could not have had guidance; we would not have given alms, nor would we have prayed ;

“Send down peace upon us, and make us steadfast in resistance;

"For they are up against us, and want to pervert us by force:

"But we refuse !"

The last line was the burthen of the song. With this spirit they defended their lives, their homes, their women and children, and their religion. The siege went on for a month, when the patience of the Allies was exhausted. A storm greatly discouraged them, as it wrought great confusion in their camp, and they retreated once again disappointed and defeated.

The Jews were the most prosperous and ~~The Jewish War~~ educated community in Arabia. They could not like the rise of Islam because it would greatly rob them of their predominance: therefore they grew hostile to the Prophet and his followers. This hostility found vent in many petty ways: for instance in insulting the Prophet and molesting the Muslim ladies. The Prophet bore the insults meekly, but the molestation of ladies could not be easily borne by the proud and sensitive Arabs. One such incident led to a quarrel in which a Jew and a Muslim were killed. The Banu Qainuqa'—the Jewish tribe concerned—retired to their strongholds and declared war against Muslims. The latter had to

fight. After a siege of a fortnight, they surrendered and were allowed to go to Syria unmolested. Another Jewish tribe, the Banu Nazir, once invited the Prophet to a dinner and tried to murder him. The attempt failed, but now the hostility between the tribe and Muslims could no longer be hidden. But the Prophet did not attack them: he simply asked them to renew their covenant which they refused to do and declared war. They were besieged and forced to leave Medina. Most of them settled at Khaibar. Later they were induced to join the league which was formed against Muslims and which resulted in the Battle of Ahzab. They were left unmolested even after this. But they went on conspiring with anti-Muslim tribes—specially the Ghatafan. Therefore, at the verification of this news, the Prophet had to send a force against them which, after considerable difficulty, defeated them. They were allowed to retain possession of their settlements provided they remained faithful and paid tribute. But they did not give up mischief. They induced one of their women—Zainab, daughter of Haris—to invite the Prophet and some of his friends to dinner and to poison them. The Prophet discovered that the food was poisoned from its taste, but a companion of his who had swallowed a morsel died, for whose murder the woman was executed. The rest of the Jews were

left unmolested. They did not prove faithful in spite of the Prophet's generosity and indulged in rebellious activities till the caliph Omar was obliged to turn them out.

The Muslims wanted to make a pilgrimage to Mecca, and as all hostilities usually stopped at the time of the annual pilgrimage and all were allowed to gather at the Holy Temple of Mecca in spite of mutual hostilities, there was nothing to dissuade them. But the Prophet took the precaution of disarming every one of the pilgrims before starting from Medina. These unarmed pilgrims stopped at Hudaibiyya—a day's journey from Mecca and sent an envoy to the Meccans asking for permission to make the pilgrimage. But the Quraish maltreated the Muslim envoys and tried to surprise the unarmed Muslims. This attempt failed, but the Muslims realized their perilous position. Yet the Quraish had tasted the fruit of driving the Muslims to desperation; therefore they resumed negotiations. A truce was, ultimately, drawn up which seemed to be distinctly against the interests of the Muslims, the terms being the following:—

- “1. This year the Muslims shall return without entering Mecca;

- “2. Next year they shall be allowed to make the pilgrimage, but they shall not stay for more than three days;
- “3. They shall not take away any Muslim already living at Mecca; but they shall allow any Muslim to remain behind if he likes to do so ;
- “4. The Muslims shall restore any Meccan going to them, but the Meccans shall not send back any Medinite Muslim coming to them:
- “5. The Arab tribes shall be free to enter into alliance with any side they like.”

The Muslims did not like this truce, but the Prophet did not like war and he induced them to accept it. An interesting thing happened which shows the Prophet's regard for treaties. Abu Jandal had been persecuted by the Quraish for accepting Islam; he now escaped and joined the Muslims. But in spite of all his entreaties and those of other Muslims, Muhammad asked him to go back which he did.

The Muslims faithfully observed the truce, and the resulting peace won for them a large number of converts, because

The Conquest of Mecca.

the peace made it possible for them to come into contact with others, and impress upon them the truth of their religion. The Quraish could hardly bear this, yet they refrained from attacking the Muslims. But they did not wait long before showing their malice. Taking advantage of the truce, the tribe of Khuza'a entered into an alliance with the Muslims. Their hereditary enemies, the Banu Bakr, became the allies of the Quraish. One night the Banu Bakr fell upon the Khuza'a who were defeated. They tried to escape worse disaster by taking shelter in the sanctuary of the Haram where, according to Arab traditions, bloodshed was considered to be sacrilege. But they were killed even there, and the Quraish, instead of stopping their allies from this brutality, participated in the crime. The Khuza'a appealed to the Prophet and demanded his help. The Prophet asked the Quraish either to disown their allies, or to induce them to pay blood-money to the relations of the murdered Khuza'aites, or to formally abrogate the Truce of Hudaibiyya which they had so sadly transgressed. The Quraish accepted the last provision, and thus once again showed their intention of fighting it out with the Muslims to the bitter end. The Prophet, after some preparations, marched against Mecca and took it. He had intended to make



this a bloodless victory; and so it might have been but for a slight skirmishing which Khalid had to do to ward off attacks upon his men. The casualties numbered 13 to 28 on the side of the Meccans and 2 on the side of the Muslims. This surely was the day for revenge ! Had not the Quraish persecuted the Prophet for full thirteen years when he had to flee for his life? Had they not thrice attacked him in his exile? Had they not committed every possible treachery? How were they to be rewarded for all this? The Prophet simply said, "This day there is no reproof against you?" The Meccans themselves could scarcely believe this! Hinda, the woman who had gnawed the heart of Hamza, came and said, "I am Hinda. Is this amnesty for me as well?" "Yes", replied the Prophet. The property of the persons who had fled to Medina with the prophet had been confiscated by the Quraish. Even that was not taken back from them !

Innumerable acts of forgiveness and generosity which stand unparalled in the history of the world crowned this triumph of Islam.

The clan of Hawazin lived to the east of Mecca--the conquest of which endangered their position. They did not, however,

The Battle of  
Hunain.

approach the Prophet for the guarantee of peace, but made warlike preparations and decided to strike at the first opportunity. The Prophet got wind of this. He first made a careful enquiry and when the report was more than confirmed, he sent an army against them. They gave battle and were defeated, when they went into their forts. All of these were taken except Taif. A deputation came to ask for the release of the prisoners of war who 6,000 in number were all set free. This was the last great war of the Prophet, which he did not push to extremities, but refrained when he was sure that the enemy could do no harm.

I leave out Tabuk because it was a mere expedition to ward off an impending attack on the frontier, and did not end in fighting.

The above account, sketchy as it necessarily is, will have shown, I hope, how the Prophet faithfully acted upon the real teachings of the Quran about jihad—how he was never aggressive or vindictive, how he was inclined to be peaceful even at the risk of treachery on the part of the enemy and danger to his cause and the interests of his followers, and how he would avoid fighting till fighting became inevitable.

### 3.—WARS OF THE REPUBLIC.

In this section it will be shown how the great “companion” caliphs of the Prophet followed the august example of their Master.

The first war that was waged after the death of the Prophet had to be undertaken to quell a widespread rebellion of Arab tribes which endangered the very existence of the Muslim faith. The spirit in which this necessary action was undertaken is demonstrated by the following advice which the aged caliph Abu Bakr gave to Osama, the general in charge of the expedition :—

“See that thou avoidest treachery. Depart not in any wise from the right. Thou shalt mutilate none, neither shalt thou kill child or aged man, nor any woman. Injure not the date-palm, neither burn it with fire, and cut not down any tree wherein is food for man or beast. Slay not the flocks or herds or camels, saving for needful sustenance. Ye may eat of the meat which the men of the land shall

bring unto you in their vessels, making mention thereon of the name of the Lord. And the monks with shaven heads, if they submit, leave them unmolested. Now march forward in the name of the Lord, and may He protect you from sword and pestilence!"

The Muslim expedition for pacifying the Peninsula and quelling the grand rebellion once again alarmed the non-Muslim tribes. Some of them belonged to the kingdom of Hira which was situated towards the North East. They raided Muslim territory and caused some mischief. The Muslims retaliated and invaded Hira. Now Hira was a semi-dependent kingdom under the influence of Persia. Thereupon the Persian governor of Chaldea intervened, though he had not stopped his master's allies from hostilities against Muslims. He was defeated and Hira fell into the hands of the Muslims. The aged caliph Abu Bakr died at this juncture and was succeeded by the great Omar. Persia also witnessed a change of rulers. Yezdjard who now succeeded to the throne of Xerxes was a young and energetic emperor. The war went on and resulted in several defeats to the Persians including the capture of Madain—the capital of the Empire. A peace was patched up, but the Persians chafed under this humility and broke the treaty

at the first opportunity. The Persian raids started once again, and, after considerable hesitation, the Muslims had to retaliate. But before retaliation they had to induce the Caliph to give his consent. The way in which this consent was given throws a flood of light upon the doctrine of jihad. To quote a well-known authority\* :—

“At last worried beyond endurance by the incessant raids of the Persians, and apprehending a serious attack from their king who had collected a large army towards the north, the Saracens of Mesopotamia sent a deputation to the caliph for permission to repel the threatened danger. Omar enquired of the deputation the cause of the frequent risings on part of the Persians. “May be”, said he, “the Moslems treat Zimmist† badly, that they break their faith persistently and rebel against us”. “Not so”, they answered,—“we do not deal with them otherwise than with honesty and good faith”. “How can that be?”, naturally asked the Caliph, “Is there not one honest man among them?” Then answered the leader of the deputation, “Thou hast forbidden us, commander of the faithful, to enlarge our boundaries, and their king

---

\*Amir Ali: A short History of the Saracens.

†Non—Muslim subjects and allies.

is in their midst to stir them up. Two kings can in no wise exist together, until the one expel the other. It is not that we have treated them harshly, but that their king has incited them to rise against us after having made submission. And so it will go on, until thou shalt remove the barrier and leave us to go forward and expel their king. Not till then will their hopes and machinations cease”.

These views were also confirmed by Hurmuzan\* who had been brought as a prisoner to Medina and had adopted Islam. It now became clear to Omar that the ban against an advance towards the East must be withdrawn. In self-defence, nothing was left but to crush the Chosroes, and take entire possession of their realm!

Muir also admits that the Muslims could do nothing except fight in self-defence. The Saracens, when they got permission, attacked Persia and conquered it.

The second great war of the Republic was against the Eastern Roman Empire. The Emperors of Constantinople had viewed the rise of a mighty

---

\*The ex-Governor of Chaldea who had fought against the Muslims for Hira.

Arabia with natural misgivings, and there were, several times, preparations of war from their side. But their opportunity did not come until some of the Arabs rebelled against the caliph at the death of the Prophet. They gathered an army at Balca—not far from the frontier. While Osama was pacifying Arabia, Eastern Rome was causing trouble to the Muslims through some of her Syrian subjects who were Arabs. The Muslim had to defend himself and the result was the long war between the two powers. A small incident in that war is very instructive.

The Patriarch of Jerusalem, after a long siege, offered to surrender the city if the caliph would come and take it in person. Omar conceded the request. He was received at the gate by the Patriarch with whom the caliph went into the city, talking upon various topics. When they entered the Church of the Resurrection, it was the time for Muslim prayers. The Patriarch courteously requested the Caliph to offer his prayers there, but he refused, saying, "If I do so, the Muslims may infringe upon your rights in a future age by pretending to follow my example". And, instead of praying inside the church, he offered his prayers on the steps outside.

The Muslims were all along enjoined to act humanely, and not to interfere with non-combatants or their property or their crops. Only the minimum force was to be used. A handful of Muslims conquered the two great Empires—not because their resources were superior, but because their enthusiasm was great, and they were welcomed and aided by the subject peoples themselves who had long been oppressed by their rulers and who now saw in the mild rule of the Muslims and their generous treatment of the conquered peoples the panacea of the evils they had so patiently borne. Every non-Muslim people living under the rule of the caliph enjoyed not only peace and security, but complete autonomy as well which lived on in the form of capitulations in the Turkish Empire upto quite recent times. The only distinction between a Muslim and a Zimmi was that the former was required to pay Zakat ( $2\frac{1}{2}$  per cent) upon his property every year and fight the enemies of the realm, while the latter paid a comparatively easier tax known as the Jaziya and, for this money, was exempt both from Zakat and military service. This Jaziya was not at all a new tax, it had existed right upto the Muslim conquest in the Roman Empire under the same designation and a similar capitation tax was universally levied under the Sassanides in the Persian



Empire. The Muslims did not invent this tax; they only continued what had already existed.

I hope this sketch has shown that the caliphs did not wage wars to indulge in unnecessary bloodshed or to satisfy an insatiable lust for conquest. They did not want to conquer these two empires when the war began; they were simply trying to stand upon defence. How could these ill-organized and scanty bands of Arabs dare to court disaster by invading the two mightiest and the oldest powers of the world? They had ever looked upon them with awe and fear; the empires themselves were driven by the unseen hand of Destiny into a conflict with the rude sons of the desert in spite of the latter's unwillingness to fight ! There seems to be a law of political gravitation which gives young, vigorous people opportunities to show their capabilities; it acted in favour of the Arabs, and who can say that they misused their great opportunity?

## CHAPTER IX

# RELATIONS WITH NON-MUSLIMS.

It is universally recognised that Islam is a democratic religion; but there is an equally prevalent notion that this democracy is limited to the believers only. It is thought that Islam tends to create an armed community of equal and free partners in hostility to the rest of the world. But there could be no greater misunderstanding. Islam insists upon nothing less than the brotherhood of man. The following verse will reinforce this statement:—

*“All men are a single nation”.* (II: 213).

The interests of humanity are the same. Once the world realizes this great truth, there will remain no ‘clash of interests’. No narrow patriotism of race,

country or religion will stand in the way of the millennium of universal peace.

But variety and pride prevent men from understanding the essential unity of humanity. Is the white Englishman—the conqueror of the universe—the same as the black Negro who blacks his boots without a murmur? Or the American millionaire whose wealth knows no bounds like the sweating Chinaman who works in the mines and does not know what it is to have more than one meal a day? How can my lord the Duke whose blood is the bluest of the blue realize that the despised groom of his stables is not much different from him? The Quran tries to cut at the root of this notion by saying:—

*“O you men ! surely we have created you of a male and a female, and made you tribes and families that you may know one another; surely the most honourable of you with Allah is the one among you most careful (of his duty); surely Allah is Knowing, Aware”.*  
(XLIX: 13).

Thus no pride in birth or rank is to be a hinderance in the prevalence of full equality; for is not every man born of a man and a woman? If

there is to be any aristocracy among mankind. it is to be the aristocracy of good deeds. And who will grudge this aristocracy its honour? Except the people who will be naturally respected for their good deeds, and whose honour will not bring harm to the world, none is to enjoy an exalted position. The honour of good deeds even carries no privileges against the rest of humanity, and much less can any Muslim refuse to act justly to his fellow-beings simply on account of belonging to a particular religion. Nor can a believer in the equality of mankind be hostile to any section of it except the persecutors and the unjust whose deeds militate against this high ideal.

But Islam nowhere stops at mere platitudes. It lays down definite rules as to how a Muslim should deal with his brethren of other faiths. The utmost that he is allowed to do against non-Muslims is to repel the attacks of his persecutors with the minimum amount of violence necessary for self-preservation. This will have become clear from the verses quoted in the chapter regarding jihad. A Muslim, under those verses can use violence, but the best thing is to forget and forgive:—

*“And the recompense of evil is punishment like it, but whoever forgives and makes peace, he shall have*

*his reward from Allah, surely He does not love the unjust*. (XLII: 40).

A more vigorous teaching is the following:—  
*“Repel evil by good”*. (XXIII: 96).

Again.

*“And not alike are the good and the evil. Repel (evil) with what is best, when lo! he between whom and you was enmity would be as if he were a warm friend”*. (XLI: 34).

Ibni Abbas is reported to say that the Prophet explained this verse by saying that the ‘repelling of evil with what is best’ means to be patient when angry and to forgive when injured. He who follows this will be able to convert his enemies into close and intimate friends.

Thus hatred is to be conquered by love; but the Muslim is to do more. He should give his brother no cause to be offended and thus harbour ill feelings. He must abstain from doing any harm and should not even use harsh language.

*“And say to My servants that they speak that which is best”*. (XVII: 53).

He should not behave insolently towards other people:—

*“And do not go about in the land exultingly, for you cannot cut through the earth nor reach the mountains in height.*

*“All this—the evil of it—is hateful in the sight of your Lord”.* (XVII: 37, 38).

Good behaviour towards ones fellow-beings is so important in the eyes of the Prophet that he is reported to have said:—

“I have been sent to perfect good behaviour and politeness”. (Mishkat : Abu Hurera).

“The man with the most perfect faith is one who is the most polite”. (Mishkat: Abu Hurera).

“God has sent me to teach good manners and good deeds”. (Jabir).

“Ill-natured habits spoil good deeds as vinegar spoils honey”. (Kinzul Amal: Ali).

“Goodness is good behaviour and badness is to think of something which, if it becomes known to him whom it concerns, would annoy him”. (Ibni Omar).

“Nothing is heavier in the scales of deeds than good behaviour”.

“I love the man most whose behaviour is the best”. (Mishkat).

The above traditions are difficult to translate, because the Arabic word for ‘behaviour’ in the original really means a man’s whole dealings with his fellow-beings—not merely politeness which may be superficial. What the Prophet really meant to convey is that there should be genuine love and regard for each other. The following traditions will make this clear:—

“He who loves his brother simply for the sake of God (unselfishly) and tells him that he loves him, then they will both enter paradise, and he who loves more unselfishly will be higher in rank than his friend.” (Abdullah Bin Omar).

“If two men love each other, the one who loves more is the greater”. (Ahya-ul-ulum).

“By the Being in whose hands is **Mohammad’s** life, none can be a Muslim until he wishes the same for his brother as he wishes for himself”. (Mishkat).

**"They will be nearer to me on the Day of Judgment whose behaviour is the best and whose hearts are soft for others and who love others and are loved by others". (Ahya-ul-ulum).**

**"A Muslim loves others and is loved by others. One who neither loves, nor is loved is worthless". (Ahya-ul-ulum).**

**"He is not a Muslim who satisfies his hunger by taking food, while his neighbour remains hungry."**  
**(Mishkat: Ibni Zubair).**

**"Exchange gifts with one another so that it may create love".** Adabul Mufrad.

**"Give refuge to him who asks for it; give alms to a man begging in the name of Allah; accept invitations; and repay the good done to you. If you cannot do this, pray for the man".**

**(Ibni Omar: Khairul Mowaiz .**

**"Those who console the afflicted shall be rewarded". (Mishkat: Abdulla bin Mas'ud).**

**"He will not enter Paradise whose neighbour is not immune from evil from him".**

**(Mishkat: Abu Hurera ).**



When Imam Husain—the great martyr—was asked as to who was a neighbour, he replied. “Every one who lives in any of the forty houses adjoining your house is your neighbour”.

‘ The great Omar is reported to have said:—

“There should not be trouble in your love or death in your enmity. When you love another, do not trouble him like a child; when you are hostile to another, do not tolerate his destruction”.

These traditions will show that Islam teaches the love of ones fellow beings as a primary virtue. But one may entertain the doubt that all of these teachings are to be observed in relations with Muslims only: but this would be a totally wrong interpretation, as there is made no such distinction in them. Abdullah, the son of Omar, would not eat the meat of a goat slaughtered for him until he had sent some to his neighbour who was a Jew, as he thought it his duty to share his meals with all his neighbours in the light of the above traditions.

Next to love, comes the virtue of forbearance. In this respect as well, Islam is equally emphatic. Says the Holy Quran:—

*“And hasten to forgiveness from your Lord and a garden, the extensiveness of which is (as) the heavens and the earth; it is prepared for those who guard (against evil);*

*“Those who spend (benevolently) in ease as well as in straitness, and those who restrain (their) anger and pardon men; and Allah loves the doers of good to others”.* (III: 132, 133).

Commenting upon this Moulana Muhammad Ali says:—

‘The verse has on many occasions inspired the noblest thoughts of toleration and charitableness. Hasan’s servant having on one occasion thrown a boiling hot dish on his master obtained his liberty with monetary help by reciting this verse. Thinking he would be punished for his fault, he repeated the words:—“Those who restrain their anger.” Hasan said he was not angry. “And pardon men”, added the servant. Hasan said, “I pardon you”. “And loves the doers of good,” concluded the offending servant. “I give you liberty and four hundred pieces of silver” was the response. “A noble instance of moderation and generosity” is Sale’s comment upon this incident’.

The Quran repeats the injunction to be patient in so many places that all the verses cannot be quoted here conveniently. Some have already been quoted elsewhere. It would, however, be useful to quote a few sayings of the Prophet:—

“God will pardon the man who restrains his anger and pardons others”.

“He who restrains his anger while he can take revenge will be greatly rewarded by Allah”.

“God never degrades a man because of his patience and forbearance”. (Mishkat).

“If a man strikes any one without justice, he shall be punished on the Day of Judgment”.

‘Do not even point at your brother with arms. Who knows that Satan may stretch your hand and you may fall into the fire of Hell?’

(Mishkat: Abu Hurera).

“If a man even points at his brother with an iron arm, angels curse him till he puts it away, even though he be his father’s son”.

(Mishkat : Abu Hurera).

“Escape from prejudice which is false; do not pry into the affairs of others; do not act as a spy

against your brother; do not buy simply to increase its price; do not bear enmity or hatred. O servants of Allah ! become brethren”.

(Miskhat : Abu Hurera).

Addressing Shaik Bin Qais the Prophet said, “God loves two qualities in thee; forbearance and thinking before doing a deed”. (Mishkat).

The Prophet has been described as “the Mercy for the two worlds”—a title which he amply justified by his deeds and teachings.

He said:—

“He who does not show mercy shall see no mercy (from his Lord).

“God is not merciful to him who is not merciful to men”.

“God is merciful to him who is merciful to His creation”.

“Be kind to what is on the Earth, so that God may be merciful to you in Heaven”.

“If you are merciful to anything, even though it be an animal for slaughter, God will be merciful to you”.

“Show mercy that you may see mercy; pardon men’s faults so that your faults may be pardoned”.

“God says : If you desire My mercy, be merciful to My creation”.

The Prophet once said to his companions, “No one shall enter paradise who is not merciful”. They said, “We are merciful”. He replied, “Be merciful to mankind in general”.

The following are a few of the Prophet’s teachings regarding gentle behaviour:—

“God is kind and loves kindness and gentleness”.

“He who got a portion from gentleness got a portion from goodness, and he who did not get a portion from gentleness, got no goodness”.

He who has three qualities will die in peace, and go to paradise—gentle behaviour towards the weak, affection to ones parents, and goodness to ones slaves”

“God hates most the most quarrelsome man”.

Even sarcastic language and hard words are forbidden—

*“And do not abuse even those whom they call upon besides Allah, lest, exceeding the limits, they should accuse Allah out of ignorance”.* (VI: 109). -

The Prophet said:—

“A man ought not to be sarcastic”.

“Musalmans are not sarcastic, harsh, or abusive”.

The Prophet was asked to curse his persecutors; he replied, “I have not been sent to curse, but to be merciful.”

Next to mercy comes justice. If a man is just, his relations with the rest of the mankind cannot be anything but good. There would not be half the ill-will and strife in the world if there were a little more justice. How difficult do we find it to be fair to our adversaries! How ready we are to side with our own nation or country, even if it is unjust! How often do people try to hide the faults—nay, the crimes—of their partisans! And all this leads to undying bitterness and hatred. But the

Holy Quran strikes at the very root of this habit in the following verses:—

*“Surely Allah commands you to make over trusts to those worthy of them, and that when you judge between people, you judge with justice; surely Allah admonishes you with what is excellent; surely Allah is Seeing, Knowing”.* (IV: 58).

A Muslim should not hide the truth when its expression is demanded by the requirements of justice:—

*“And do not conceal testimony, and whoever conceals it, his heart is surely sinful, and Allah knows what you do”.* (II: 283).

*“O you who believe! be maintainers of justice, bearers of witness for Allah's sake, though it may be against your own selves or (your) parents or near relatives, if he (who is affected by your testimony) be rich or poor, Allah is most competent to deal with them both, therefore do not follow your low desires, lest you deviate; and if you swerve or turn aside, then surely Allah is aware of what you do”.* (IV: 135).

*“O you who believe! be upright for Allah, bearers of witness with justice, and let not hatred of a*

*people incite you not to act equitably ; act equitably, that is nearer to piety, and be careful of (your duty to) Allah, surely Allah is aware of what you do".*

(V: 8).

*"And whoever commits a fault or a sin, then accuses of it one innocent, he indeed takes upon himself the burden of calumny and a manifest sin".*

(IV: 112).

No Muslim, is allowed to co-operate with another in injustice :—

*"And help one another in goodness and piety, and do not help one another in sin and in aggression".*

(V: 2).

Fair dealing goes hand in hand with justice. The Quran lays full stress upon this as well:—

*"And to Midian (We sent) their brother Shuaib. He said: O my people! serve Allah, you have no God other than Him. Clear proof has indeed come to you from your Lord, therefore give full measure and weight and do not diminish to men their things, and do*



*not make mischief in the land after its reform; this is better for you if you are believers".* (VII: 85).

*"And, O my people! give full measure and weigh fairly, and defraud not men of their things, and do not act corruptly in the land, making mischief."*  
(XI: 85).

*"And give full measure when you measure out, and weigh with a true balance ; this is fair and better in the end".* (XVII: 35).

*"Give a full measure and be not of those who diminish;*

*"And weigh things with a right balance;*

*"And do not wrong men of their dues, and do not act corruptly making mischief."*  
(XXVI: 181, 182, 183).

*"And He made the measure,*

*"That you may not be inordinate in respect of the measure.*

*"And keep up the balance with equity and do not make the measure deficient".* (LV: 7, 8, 9).

*“Woe to the defaulters,*

*“Who, when they take the measure [of their  
dues] from men take it fully,*

*“But when they measure out to others or weigh  
out for them, they are deficient,*

*“Do these think that they shall be raised  
again,*

*“For a mighty day,*

*“The day on which men shall stand before  
the Lord of the Worlds?”* [LXXXIII: 1-6].

The Holy Prophet said:—

*“He who sells a thing without telling the  
buyer its faults incurs the wrath of Allah”.*

*“Abstain from dishonesty, so that you may  
not be disgraced on the Day of Judgment.”*

*“He who hides the dishonesty of the dis-  
honest is like him”.*

*“All the sins of a martyr are pardoned ex-  
cept his unpaid debts.”*

“When a nation takes to dishonesty, Allah creates in the hearts of its members fear and awe (of men); and the nation which does not give full measure suffers from starvation, and the nation which rules against justice is involved in bloodshed, and the nation breaking its covenants is defeated”.

(Mishkat: Ibni Abbas).

“If the buyer and seller speak the truth and wish well to each other, the dealing shall be blessed for the both. But if they hide the faults and lie, it will be totally inauspicious”. (Ahyaululum).

“A false oath may help in selling a commodity, but it destroys the good in the earning therefrom”. (Ahyaululum).

“Do not betray the confidence reposed in you”. (Ahyaululum).

“Do not betray a trust, nor be dishonest even to one who is dishonest to you”. (Abu Hurera)

“A believer could contract any habit except those of falsehood and dishonesty”. (Mishkat: Uns)

“Honesty leads to prosperity, and dishonesty to misery”. (Ali: Kinzulamal).

“He who is not honest is not a believer, nor he who does not fulfil his promise”

(Mishkat: Ibni Mas‘ud).

“The best earning is from ones own labour and from a trade wherein there exists no falsehood or dishonesty”. (Rafi).

“None eats better food than one who lives upon his own labour”.

Uns reports in Mishkat that there was not a single sermon delivered by the Prophet in which he did not say that he who lacks honesty lacks faith.

Ali, the son-in-law of the Prophet related the following incident which took place when Islam was already powerful in the land:—“The Prophet owed a few dinars to a certain Jew named Falan Jabr who once demanded the payment of his debt. The Prophet replied that he had nothing at that time to give him. The Jew said, “I will not part from you until you pay the debt”. The Prophet said, “I will remain with you”, and remained at the Jew’s place and offered his midday, afternoon, sunset, night, and morning prayers there. The companions of the Prophet did not like this and threatened the Jew. Muhammad came to know of this and asked them, “What are you

doing?" They replied, "O Prophet ! How can we bear to see a Jew imprison you?" He replied, "My God has forbidden me to be unjust to any one whether we have a treaty with his people or not". The man was so impressed with the noble character and forbearance of the Prophet that he accepted Islam'.

This is how a Muslim is to fulfil his obligations, but he should forgive and be patient if others owe anything to him. The Prophet said, "He who gives some time to the poor or forgives a debt will be relieved of his troubles on the Day of Judgment by God".

"God is kind to him who is gentle in buying and selling, and lending and realizing debts".

{Ahyaululum: Wasila}.

Charity is one of the cardinal principles of Islam. The institution of Zakat—the Muslim poor tax or capital levy, because it is levied upon the whole wealth and not the annual income of an individual—is a unique testimony to the fact that Islam considers charity to be a pillar of religion. The fact that Zakat is organized charity speaks volumes for the genius of the great Prophet, for every day the world is recognizing the necessity of organized charity.

But Islam does not stop there. Zakat is the prescribed minimum which must be exceeded by every one who wants to act in the light of the teachings of the Quran where the injunctions to be charitable are repeated so often that they baffle any attempt at extensive quotation in this small work.

The following verses, taken at random, will give some idea:—

*“And seek by means of what Allah has given you the future abode and do not neglect your portion of this world and do good (to others) as Allah has done good to you, and do not seek to make mischief in the land; surely Allah does not love the mischief-makers”.*

(XXVIII: 77).

*“Say: O my servants who believe ! Be careful of (your duty to) your Lord: for those who do good in this world is good, and Allah’s earth is spacious, only the patient will be paid back their reward in full without measure”.* (XXXIX, 10).

The Prophet said:—

“Do not consider a charitable act insignificant even though it be but to meet your brother with a smile”.

“The charitable are nearer to God, nearer to

Paradise, and nearer to men, but farther from the Hell". (Khairul Mowaiz: Abu Hurera).

"Cursed is he who keeps people away from his generosity, and eats alone, and beats his slave".  
(Mishkat: Abi Imama).

"Wealth does not consist in riches, but in generosity". (Mishkat).

"The rich man who is pious and benevolent is loved by his Lord". (Mishkat: Sa'd).

A Musalman should on no account interfere with the property of others. The Prophet said:—

"Musalmans ! beware ! never oppress anybody. No ones property is lawful unto you except with his permission".

"A man who claims what does not rightfully belong to him is not of us". (Abuzar).

"Any one who usurps even a span of ground of others will be obliged to bear the burden of its earth on the Day of Judgment".

A Muslim cannot even take back the property confiscated by an alien people without justification

except with their consent. Ali, the fourth caliph and an authority upon the Prophet's teachings holds with Zahri, Omar bin Omar, and Hasan Basri that if non-Muslims conquer a Muslim country and confiscate the property of Muslim residents, the conquerors become the legal masters of the confiscated property. The learned Qazi Shokani also holds the same in Nelulowtar. The Hidaya, the famous book of Hanafi jurisprudence, also confirms this view.

The root of unfair dealings is greed which is condemned in the following words by the Quran:—

*“O you who believe! most surely many of the doctors of law and the monks eat away the property of men falsely, and turn (them) from Allah's way, and (as for) those who hoard up gold or silver and do not spend in Allah's way, announce to them a painful chastisement.*

*“(On the day when it shall be heated in the fire of hell, then their foreheads and their sides, and their backs shall be branded with it. This is what you hoarded up for yourselves, therefore taste what you hoarded”.* (IX, 34, 35).

*“Therefore be careful of (your duty to) Allah as much as you can, and hear and obey and spend*



*(in the way of Allah), it is better for your souls; and whosoever is saved from the greed of his soul, these it is that are the successful.*

*"If you set apart for Allah a goodly portion. He will double it for you and forgive you; and Allah is the Multiplier (of rewards), Forbearing,*

*"The Knower of the unseen and the seen, the Mighty, the Wise". (LXIV: 16, 17, 18).*

The following Traditions reinforce these verses:—

*"Save yourselves from greed, because it has destroyed peoples before you who indulged in bloodshed amongst themselves and did not take even relationship into consideration".*

*"Greed and faith cannot remain together in the same heart".*

*"Greed spoils the learning of the learned."*

Niggardliness, an outcome of greed is spoken of in the following words:—

*"Behold! you are those who are called upon to spend in Allah's way, but among you are those who are niggardly and whoever is niggardly is niggardly against his own soul". (XLVII: 38).*

The Prophet said,

“The man who is asked to help in the name of Allah and gives nothing is the worst of mankind”.

(Mishkat: Ibni Abbas).

Another thing which stands in the way of good relations is envy. All who have the least knowledge of the problem of class hatred in industrial centres are aware of the fact that half of the bitterness in the heart of the workers comes from envy. The Quran discourages this in the following words:—

*“And do not covet that by which Allah has made some of you excel others, men shall have the benefit of what they earn and women shall have the benefit of what they earn; and ask Allah of His grace, surely Allah knows all things”.* (IV: 32).

*“.....or do they envy the people for what Allah has given them of His grace?”* (IV: 54).

The Prophet reinforced these teachings by saying:—

“Abstain from envy, for envy consumes good deeds as fire burns wood”.

“The best of men have no envy”.

The prophet laid great stress upon sincerity. He said:

“Allah does not look at your appearance or riches, but he cares for your hearts and deeds”.  
(Kinzulamal: Abu Hurera).

“The sincere are blessed, they are the lamp of guidance, through them are averted the evils of mischief”.  
(Thuban).

No Muslim can treat a treaty, a covenant, or a promise as “a mere scrap of paper”. The Quran lays down:—

“*O you who believe! fulfil your obligations*”.  
(V: 1).

“.....and fulfil your promise, surely you will be questioned about your promises”. (XVII: 34).

The Prophet said:—

“A covenant is a debt for a Muslim which he must pay”.  
(Kinzulamal: Ali).

“Do not care if a man prays or fasts exceedingly, but do see whether he speaks the truth and fulfils his trust and is pious in distress”.  
(Kinz: Omar).

“He who does not abide by his promise is not of me”. (Muslim).

“He who kills an ally without his fault shall not enter Paradise”. (Abu Daud).

There is an interesting anecdote about Amir Muawiya which shows how these teachings affected the immediate disciples of the Prophet:—

‘There was a treaty between Amir Muawiya and the (Eastern) Romans. When it was about to expire, Muawiya prepared to attack the Empire. (While the army was proceeding) he saw a horseman approach who came before him and exclaimed, “God is Great ! God is Great ! one should abide by ones treaties and should not break them like this”. It was discovered that the horseman was a ‘companion’ of the Prophet, Omar bin Ahsa. Amir Muawiya enquired as to why he had come. He replied, “The Prophet told us not to break a treaty before its time expires. If you want to break this treaty, at least inform the other party!” Muawiyya was so impressed that he came back and dispersed his army.’

(Tirmizi and Abu Daud).

Love, tolerance, patience, forbearance, forgiveness, fair dealing, justice, observation of pacts and

treaties, kindness, charity, and abstention from greed, envy, and usurpation of others' property are the source of good relations between man and man, and the above will have shown that Islam lays full stress upon them. It does not stop at broadly hinting at the virtue of universal love but goes deep into the matter, and, by its teachings, ensures peace and amity among mankind.

## CHAPTER X:

# ISLAM, THE RELIGION OF PEACE.

Islam is nothing if not the religion of peace. The word 'Islam' itself comes from the same root as 'Salam'—peace. Every Musalman salutes his brother: 'Peace be unto you!' "A Muslim, according to the Holy Quran, is he who has made his peace with God and man"—with the former by complete submission to his will, and with the latter by being good in this life. Submission to the will of Allah gives man the most complete peace: his desires and ambitions no longer haunt him day and night, and his failures never trouble him. If a calamity befalls him, it is the will of the Almighty to which he has submitted, and which, in its immense wisdom and goodness, is

never malicious. The Quran puts the real definition of a Muslim very beautifully in the following verse:

*“Yea, whoever submits himself entirely to Allah, and he is the doer of good to others, he has his reward from his Lord, and there is no fear for him, nor shall he grieve”.* (II: 112).

But ‘entire submission to Allah’ does not mean any cheap fatalism, for the Quran thus defines it :

*“Consider the succession of Ages,*

*“Most surely man is in loss,*

*“Except those who believe, and do the right thing, and enjoin on each other Truth, and enjoin on each other patience”.* (CIII: 1,2,3).

Patience comes after endeavour, try your utmost, adopt the right methods, and then leave the result to God. All that man can do is to try to do his best, he seldom controls the results. ‘Every man and every woman shall have what he or she has earned’—yet how is it that we are sometimes disappointed? Here Faith comes in; shall we doubt the wisdom of the Almighty, the Beneficent, the Merciful, the Compassionate? Shall we doubt that

He is ever kind to us, and therefore He does what is best for us? In such cases Islam—entire submission to the will of Allah—gives us peace, for our will, by submission, is identified with the Divine will, and thus by adopting Islam, we have made our Peace with God. Peace with mankind is made by 'doing good to others'—a dictum which few will doubt.

I have tried to show, in this treatise, how this side of Islam is very strong, how it teaches love of ones fellow beings and ensures good treatment of even those who are hostile to Islam provided they do not openly fight and persecute Muslims and thus break the Peace. 'Those who make mischief in the land' are denounced, and a Muslim's first duty is to ensure peace where he lives—not only for himself but for others as well. He should risk his life in this noble endeavour. He is enjoined to fight for religious freedom and the protection of all places of worship—be they mosques, churches, or synagogues.

A true Muslim's life after death, as well, shall be perfect peace; for according to Islam, salvation is nothing but the attainment of complete peace. Paradise is 'the abode of peace'—for the Quran says, "*And their greetings in it shall be; Peace*". (X: 10).



Paradise is nothing but peace:--

*"They shall not hear therein vain or sinful discourses except Peace, Peace!"* (LVI: 25, 26).

The ideal before Islam is peace; *"And Allah invites to the abode of Peace"*.....  
In short Islam is a structure of peace, and its master architect is Allah Himself who is the Author of Peace:----

*"He is Allah besides whom there is no God; the Knower of the unseen and the seen; He is the Beneficent, the Merciful, He is Allah, besides whom there is no God, the King, the Holy, the Author of Peace, the Granter of security, Guardian over all, the Mighty, the Restorer of every loss, the Possessor of every greatness. Glory be to Allah from what they put up (with Him);*

*He is Allah the Creator, the Maker, the Fashioner; His are the most excellent names, whatever is in the Heavens and the Earth declares His glory, and He is the Mighty, the Wise".* (LIX: 22, 23, 24).

FINIS.

